



SCHOLÉ GROUPS

CLASSICAL ACADEMIC PRESS

Handbook - Working Draft

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Introduction

This handbook is for use by Scholé Group Directors only. Please do not share this document without express written consent from Classical Academic Press.

Please note: An abbreviated version of this handbook, the [Scholé Groups Start-up Guide](#), is free and available to all on the Scholé Groups website: [ScholeGroups.com](#).

What follows is a description of Scholé Group co-ops (SG), our approach to curriculum and pedagogy, and some operational guidance that may be helpful to you as a SG director, teacher, or parent. Please note that this handbook will evolve (over several editions) as time goes by. Please see the date and version number listed above to ensure you have the latest version. Your comments and suggestions are welcome as we improve and clarify this handbook.

While this handbook is designed to be practical and useful for helping SGs implement restful learning in their homeschool community, we also recommend a few key books that further describe *scholé* or restful learning:

- *Learning from Rest* (forthcoming) by Christopher A. Perrin. This book provides a pithy summary of the philosophy, history, and practice of *scholé*.
- [Teaching from Rest](#) by Sarah MacKenzie. This book does an excellent job of helping us imagine what restful education could look like in a family's life and rhythms.
- [Only the Lover Sings: Art and Contemplation](#) by Josef Pieper. This short book (76 pages) does a remarkable job presenting the basis for education as contemplative, restful learning.
- [Leisure the Basis of Culture](#) by Josef Pieper. This book is the more academic version of *Only the Lover Sings*. It is the definite treatment of the history and philosophy of *scholé*.

I. General Description

A. Welcome/Overview

Scholé Groups are homeschooling cooperatives that employ the content of a classical curriculum and pursue restfulness (*scholé*) in learning. Any community of three or more homeschooling families may apply to become a Scholé Group. The Scholé Groups Network offers each Scholé Group a wealth of resources and benefits to help them pursue these ideals—at no charge.

B. Four Core Values Scholé Groups

We seek to ensure that each SG is characterized by four essential qualities or ideals:

1. **Classical:** Scholé Groups are committed to a classical course of studies, a path that has been tried and proven since ancient times. The long tradition of classical education has emphasized the seeking after truth, goodness, and beauty and the study of the liberal arts and the great books. A classical Christian education should be like a stroll through a garden of delight. As with any good walk, there may be digressions, but the main path—the key spots and visitations—should be known. Scholé Groups follow a core sequence of studies (described in further detail below), which includes Latin, logic, writing, and rhetoric as well as the great books, mathematics, and science. Because each Scholé Group is unique in its setting and composition, we encourage our groups to structure their community time according to the specific needs and goals of their co-op, focusing on certain areas of study together and others individually in their homes. Likewise, we encourage each group to use the tools and published resources they find most fitting and helpful.
2. **Restful:** Scholé Groups are united by their pursuit of restfulness in learning, or *scholé*. The word *scholé* (pronounced skoh-LAY) comes from a Greek word that means “restful learning,” with the connotation of “contemplation,” “conversation,” and “reflection.” Ironically, it is also the basis for our English word school, which no longer holds for us these restful connotations. Scholé Groups seek deep engagement that results in enjoyable, permanent learning that is free from anxiety—that is, they seek to put the *scholé* back into (home) schools. The concept of *scholé* cuts across the grain of modern education and therefore takes a principled commitment to the ideal in order to be implemented and realized. We provide each Scholé Group with a variety of educational and practical resources for understanding and implementing *scholé* in their communities.

3. **Communal:** Scholé Groups are vibrant communities of adult and student learners united by a passion for truth, goodness, and beauty. Each Scholé Group co-op is comprised of three or more families who gather regularly to pursue studies together. While student learning is at the core of Scholé Groups, parent-teacher education is also of great value to the community. Many Scholé Groups choose to integrate parent education into their co-op activities on a regular basis using [ClassicalU](#), the teacher-training platform recommended by the Scholé Groups Network.

4. **Flexible:** Scholé Groups have the flexibility to customize their practices to their unique settings. While Scholé Groups are united by the values above, they also exhibit a great deal of variety. Some Scholé Groups prefer maintaining a small group setting, meeting weekly in a member’s home and focusing on a few key areas of study. Other Scholé Groups have grown into large communities that offer a variety of courses and meet several times per week. Likewise, individual Scholé Groups span a wide range of Christian backgrounds—some Catholic, some Protestant, and some Eastern Orthodox (see Scholé Groups Statement of Faith in Appendix). We appreciate the diversity throughout our groups and encourage each group to seek a structure and focus that they prefer. While Scholé Groups have a great amount of flexibility, we understand that guidance can be helpful for those who desire it! With this in mind, we provide support and recommendations for Scholé Groups who are looking for guidance as they establish the structure of their group.

C. Five Essential Elements (or Perspectives) of a Scholé Group

We can view a Scholé Group from several different perspectives. It is a community seeking to learn and grow together (communal perspective); it is a classical learning community committed to the mastery of the liberal arts and sciences, and the wisdom of the Great Books (curricular perspective); it is a community seeking to employ the best teaching practices passed down to us from the classical tradition (pedagogical perspective); it is a community engaged in the Christian ecclesial tradition seeking to infuse all learning and relationships with Christian love (ecclesial perspective); and it is a community committed to Godly stewardship (stewardship perspective), through wise and sound business and operational practices, which is an embodiment of our love for God and our neighbor.

These five elements or perspectives should be kept in mind as directors seek to start and cultivate a vibrant Scholé Group. All five elements are necessary to cultivate a rich SG that enjoys community, wisdom, effective teaching, and love.

Five Essential Elements or Perspectives of a SG				
Community /Culture	Curriculum	Pedagogy/ Principles	Forms/ Practices	Forms/Adm inistration
Growing Together	Content of Wisdom	Effective Teaching	Ecclesial Tradition	Virtuous Stewardship
Weekly Gathering	Curriculum Map	<i>Festina Lente</i>	Liturgical Learning	Business Structure
Special Events	Truth, Goodness, Beauty	<i>Multum Non Multa</i>	Church Calendar	Financial Processes and Accountability
Supportive Relationships	Scope & Sequence	<i>Repetitio Mater Memoriae</i>	Fellowship and Hospitality	Defined Roles (Clear Chain of Command)
Student-Teacher-Parent Partnerships	Piety	Embodied Learning	Beautiful Settings	Clear Purpose & Central Point of Unity
Collaborative Learning	Gymnastic	Songs, Chants	Singing and Worship	Communication Processes
	Musical Education	Wonder, Curiosity	Garden of Delight	Conflict Resolution Processes
	Seven Liberal Arts	Student Virtues	Museum	
	Philosophy	<i>Scholé</i> , Contemplation	Conservatory	
	Theology		Home	

Here is a brief description of each of these elements. For a more in-depth study of the curriculum and pedagogy of a classical education, we recommend *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Philosophy of Christian Classical Education* by Kevin Clark and Ravi Jain. For more study of employing ecclesial practices to education, we recommend *Desiring the Kingdom* by James K.A. Smith and *Teaching and Christian Practices*, edited by James K.A. Smith and David Smith. For more information and understanding on the other three perspectives we recommend using the Scholé Groups Guide to ClassicalU.

Community

Education at the very least involves a teacher and a student—the beginning of a community. From the Christian perspective it also involves God Himself—which makes for a profound extension of community. Nor can we exclude the church and all the wisdom it has acquired over the past centuries—so now our community is immeasurably large. But a community can also be said to begin with mother, father, and child—a family is fundamental to any community. A Scholé Group is a blend of all these communities: the parents and child, the teacher, the church, God Himself. Luke 6 makes it clear that a teacher is a sighted guide (no blind guide) who leads a student in love and humility (first removing the plank from his own eye before daring to remove a speck from another’s eye).

A communal classical education achieves its aims collaboratively, in love. As C.S. Lewis says, we go nowhere alone, but are dependent and blessed by those around us and those who have gone before us. As the apostle Paul puts it, “What do you have that you have not also received?” (see 1 Corinthians 4:7). We have natural gifts, but it is a gift even to have those gifts developed and trained—by others. Surely there is no place for pride in our capacities if we contemplate what it truly means to be a part of community of others who serve and bless us. What can our response be but gratitude and the attempt to serve and bless others?

A community will grow and develop a culture that creates delight, peace, and refreshment. It will be achieved fundamentally through Christian love, but by means of weekly gatherings (when the Scholé Group meets together, assembles, shares, dines, plays, creates, and learns.) A healthy SG will also meet occasionally outside of weekly SG gatherings—perhaps for a beginning-of-the-year picnic, Christmas party, overnight field trip, and the like. SG parents are also collaborating on the preparation of SG gathering and learning days, and becoming closer friends in the process. They are also likely taking a ClassicalU course together, and therefore reading and discussing the same books, lectures, etc. They will also be observing one another reaching on occasion and sharing formative thoughts and ideas about one another’s teaching.

The children in a SG will also develop meaningful relationships with one another, and in particular the older will take an interest in serving the younger (much to the delight of the younger). Older students will sometimes join the younger students in free play (think capture the flag, kickball, etc.) and will also sometimes help teach younger students, under the direction of SG teachers.

Curriculum

The curriculum of the SG is both the content being taught and the course that students run (though we like to think of them walking the course). We are quick (again) to distinguish between curriculum as published materials (secondary use of

the word) and curriculum as a course of studies. SG directors are free to purchase and use any published materials they wish to teach the *scholé* curriculum.

As content, a classical curriculum can be summarized as the study of truth, goodness, and beauty (the proverbial “transcendental ideals” first cited by Plato). At the highest level, our curriculum should therefore present the wisdom of the ages, the best that has been thought and said, the “Great Conversation” to our students for study and contemplation. This content and these ideals are presented over time in the context of a community, modeled by loving teachers and contemplated by students. The curriculum of the classical tradition has also been commonly summarized as the trivium and quadrivium arts. The trivium arts are the verbal or linguistic arts that enable the mastery of language, thought, writing, and speech. They are grammar, logic, and rhetoric and are called the *trivium* because they are the “threefold way” of mastering language. The quadrivium arts are the mathematical or scientific arts that enable the mastery of number, extension, magnitude, and motion. The quadrivium arts are arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy (as bodies in motion, astronomy also corresponds to modern physics). Together the trivium and quadrivium arts are called the seven liberal arts (or *septem artes liberales* in Latin).

You will note that we have named the four levels a Scholé Group after the trivium arts (lower grammar, upper grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric). Dialectic is a synonym for logic. This convention of naming the various stages of learning is still retained from our lingering idea of a grammar school, now commonly called an elementary school. Dorothy Sayers, in her essay “The Lost Tools of Learning,” suggested that these designations (grammar, logic/dialectic, rhetoric) could also be used to designate stages of learning: younger students are well-suited to study grammar, early adolescents to study logic, and older students to study rhetoric. We have made use of this convention (as have numerous classical schools), but hold them lightly, as we do not wish to imply that the quadrivium subjects are of lesser importance, as they are not.

Our favorite summary or paradigm for the classical curriculum has been set out in the book *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Philosophy of Christian Classical Education* by Kevin Clark and Ravi Jain. In this book they point out that the early context for education of younger students was piety, gymnastic, and music—the training that students received prior to the dedicated study of the seven liberal arts. While we recommend that all SG directors read this book, it is helpful to briefly describe piety, gymnastic, and music (or musical education) here.

Pedagogy

Form & Practices

Form & Administration

D. Profiling Your Group: Discovering Your Group's Points of Unity

When you become a Scholé Group You get to define your points of unity as a group and communicate those points of unity through a Group Profile. First, what areas do you need to make decisions around as a group? Let's briefly walk through them.

- 1. Purpose**
- 2. Location**
- 3. Campus**
- 4. Religious Tradition**
- 5. Academic Style**
- 6. Financial Model**

E. Working with Scholé Groups Network

Resources

We equip the parents, teachers, and administrators of each Scholé Group with the following benefits and resources:

- **[The Scholé Groups Start-up Guide](#)**: The Start-up Guide is an abbreviated version of this handbook, provides a philosophical, pedagogical, and practical overview for group directors or individuals interested in starting or joining a Scholé Group.
- **[Scholé Mentors and Consultants](#)**: Reach out to one of our experienced Mentors and Consultants for counsel and advice. Each Scholé Mentor has significant experience and expertise with classical education generally and leading a Scholé Group specifically. You can view and contact each of our certified Mentors [here](#).
- **[The Scholé Groups File Library](#)**: Discover a collection of files created for Scholé Groups. Benefit from the work and wisdom of fellow directors and parents.

- **Forums:** Our forums are a platform upon which you can connect and collaborate with other Scholé Groups from across the globe.
- **Webinars—Live and Archived:** Join live discussions and training sessions with national leaders in the renewal of *scholé* and classical education. Notifications of upcoming webinars are sent to Scholé Group directors, and archived webinars are available to view here at your convenience.
- **20% Discount at ClassicalAcademicPress.com:** Save on classical curriculum from [Classical Academic Press](#). Scholé Groups receive a 20% discount and free shipping on any order of 20 items or more. To take advantage of this discount, please fill out this [order form](#) and email it to orders@classicalsubjects.com, or call our main office at 866-730-0711.
- **Discounts on ClassicalU Subscriptions:** Grow as a teacher and as a thinker with self-paced teacher-training courses from ClassicalU led by leaders in the renewal of classical education. Scholé Group members receive a discounted rate for individual annual plans (over \$50 in savings per person). A coupon code is distributed to each director upon acceptance of their application or renewal agreement.
- **A Free Website Template for Your Group:** Share your group with the community while facilitating communication and collaboration within your group. This customizable website template is built specifically for Scholé Groups. We'll help you connect with a website specialist who can set up your website for you! Details available [here](#). View a demo site [here](#).
- **Newsletter:** Each quarter we send out a newsletter keeping directors, teachers, and parents up to date on the activities and opportunities available throughout the Scholé Groups Network.

Structure, Fees, and Compensation

Scholé Groups Network Pricing: The Scholé Groups Network charges no fee to start and run a Scholé Group. We offer a number of benefits and resources to Scholé Groups free of charge. To those looking for further support, we make recommends for additional resources, which are available a la carte.

Individual Group Pricing: Each director is the operator of her own Scholé Group, and may operate the group as her own business. Some Scholé Groups may also chose to operate as friends, sharing expenses and without forming a registered business, but will still be registered with SG as an official SG and with a registered director (even if a volunteer). Directors are free to charge whatever tuition they deem wise.

If the group's director chooses to charge tuition, she has the freedom to determine the best pricing model for her group. That is, directors may charge tuition per student, per family,

per class, or by any other measurement they deem wise. Groups vary greatly in size and structure, and we wish each group to find and utilize the pricing structure that suits it best. For example, a group that spans many grade levels may wish to charge different tuition rates for different grade levels. A group with many class offerings within one grade level, on the other hand, may wish to charge according to which and how many classes a student is taking. We recommend marketing your group to interested families according to the pricing structure chosen by your group.

Compensation to Directors, Teachers, and Other Service Providers: Directors may generate revenue for compensating themselves, teachers, and other service providers by charging tuition within their Scholé Group.

Director's Agreement

The director(s) of a new or returning SG sign a straightforward agreement that contains the following terms in exchange for using the Scholé Group name and receiving all SG services, discounts, and support:

I (or my designee) agree to operate a Scholé Group (SG) according to the terms, philosophy, core curriculum sequence, and pedagogy specified in the Scholé Groups Startup Guide, including but not limited to the following elements:

- *I commit to operating a co-op comprised of three or more families.*
- *I commit to implementing a classical curriculum as described in the Scholé Groups Startup Guide.*
- *I commit to implementing classical pedagogical principles as described in the Scholé Groups Startup Guide, such as Festina Lente, Multum non Multa, Virtue Education, and Curiosity and Wonder.*
- *I commit to pursuing a pedagogy of “scholé” throughout the co-op to the best of my ability.*
- *I understand that our group will include the word “Scholé” in the group name or subtitle.*
- *I understand that as a SG, we will be entitled to all benefits, services, and resources provided to SGs as specified in the Scholé Groups Startup Guide. I agree not to share or distribute these benefits, services, and resources outside of my official SG roster, and to ensure that the members of my SG agree to the same.*
- *I agree to notify the Scholé Groups Network leadership if the group no longer can or wishes to keep the terms of this agreement, at which time the group will no longer receive the benefits, services, resources or support of the Scholé Groups Network, and at which time the group will remove the name “Scholé” from the group name. Each director is the operator of his/her own Scholé Group and may operate the group as his/her own business. Scholé Groups*

may also chose to operate as friends, sharing expenses and without forming a registered business, but will still be registered with the Scholé Groups Network as an official SG and with a registered director (even if a volunteer). SG makes no requirements on what curricula (published materials) are used. Directors may generate revenue for compensating themselves and teachers (and other service providers) by charging tuition of SG participating families. Directors are free to charge whatever tuition they deem wise. Compensation for teachers at a given SG is set by the director in negotiation with a given teacher. Apart from the terms of the this agreement and guidelines of the Scholé Groups Startup Guide, there are no restrictions placed on Scholé Group directors or teachers.

- *I have read and am committed to the [Scholé Groups Statement of Faith](#)*

Restrictions on Directors or Teachers

Apart from the terms of the Director's Agreement, there are no restrictions placed on directors or teachers.

Part One: Curricular Perspective

Educational Philosophy and Approach

As our name implies, we value “restful learning” that is at the root of the word *scholé*. Modern education is largely an education in anxiety, with stress created by students taking up to eight classes at a time. For each of these they are numerically graded weekly by teachers who are often driven to “teach to the test” and who use dehumanizing tests that are “machine readable” (easily quantified data). Students in such a system learn to cram, pass, and then forget. By contrast, Scholé Group directors and teachers seek to create an atmosphere of restful learning by modeling peace, tranquility, love of the subject, unrushed learning with meaningful, deep engagement of fewer books and concepts (comparatively speaking), so that learning becomes memorable, enjoyable, and permanent.



This means that Scholé Group directors and teachers will work to create engaged discussion and learning, and seek to build relationships with and among students. In an effort to recover reflection and contemplation as part of learning, Scholé Group directors may organize their group meetings and classes through a liturgical pattern (see *What is Liturgical Learning?*); through positive presentation/lecture/review; and/or through discussion/debate/engagement with text and ideas. SG classes are distinctive for their passionate teachers whose own love for the seven liberal arts is contagious. Teachers strive to lead memorable, meaningful discussions that make students “become alive” to the art they are studying and excite them for further study of the truth, beauty, and goodness the art contains.

We recommend all SG directors and teachers read and/watch the following books, courses, and articles prior to engaging in the leadership of a SG. All of the articles are available on the SG website (here), where you can easily download and read them. Some articles are also included in the appendix of this handbook.

- [*The Liberal Arts Tradition: The Philosophy of Christian Classical Education*](#)

- “*Scholé* in the Scripture: Choosing What Is Better” by Christopher Perrin (see article in full in the appendix)
- “Desiring a Kingdom School” by Christopher Perrin (see article in full in the appendix)
- Take the ClassicalU course “[Scholé \(Restful\) Learning](#)”, with Dr. Christopher Perrin
- Take the ClassicalU course “[Principles of Classical Pedagogy](#)”, with Dr. Christopher Perrin

Scholé Groups will employ two key pedagogies that are part of the classical tradition. First, they will emphasize the development of the **student/educational virtues**; second, they will employ a pattern of “**liturgical learning**.” In fact, liturgical learning is an important part of developing student virtues. While it is beyond the scope of this handbook to fully develop the student virtues and how to cultivate them, they should nevertheless be briefly described.

A. Student Virtues

Augustine described education as essentially teaching students to “love that which is lovely,” following on Plato’s idea that affections and taste must be cultivated. The classical and Christian tradition has emphasized that it is critical to model for students the love for the true, good, and beautiful, and by various means to cultivate and stir up a love for them. C.S. Lewis makes this case persuasively in his little book *The Abolition of Man*, telling us that we need to cultivate not only minds but also chests (the visceral, affective part of us), especially since presently our modern schools neglect the cultivation of affections, rendering us as “men without chests.” He comments that modern students are not so much “jungles to be cut” as “deserts that need to be irrigated.”

Even the word *student* suggests this. The word *student* is derived from the Latin word *studium*, which means “zeal,” “fondness,” and “affection.” Thus, etymologically considered, a *student* is someone who is zealous and eager for truth, goodness, beauty—for knowledge. Is it not true that there are many students—who are not really students? Until we have a child before us who is seeking and zealous for knowledge, then we really don’t have a student before us; instead we have someone we must force to do academic work, usually by means of the carrot and the stick. Such a “student” will be generally uncooperative, resistant (even if passively so) and will quickly forget what he is forced to “learn.” Teaching such “students” is no fun at all. By contrast, once a child becomes eager to learn, to know, is in fact “in love” with math, history, language, or logic—then teaching is a joy.

Great teachers know instinctively they must cultivate this *studium*, this zeal in their students. Naturally parents play the most vital role in this, and therefore parent-teachers and hired teachers must forge a partnership for success. So what are the key student virtues that we need to cultivate? What are the corresponding vices that we must overcome?

1. List of Virtues

Love: Love is a master virtue that fuels and empowers the other student virtues. Love leads to the remaining virtues. Paul teaches in 1 Cor. 13 that even if we speak in the tongues of angels (high linguistic achievement!) and fathom all mysteries (surpassing the learning of a genius) but have not love, it will be worth nothing. Students are called by God (and thus should be called by us) to “love the lovely,” to glory in God Himself and His revealed mind in nature, Scripture, and ourselves. Knowing of God’s goodness in the world, and His goodness toward us, we can live out of love and gratitude in all we do, including our study and seeking the true, good, and beautiful in all our academic work. We can always say to our students therefore, “Choose joy.”

Humility: Humility is another master virtue that leads to other virtues. We cultivate humility by taking students to the heights and showing them greatness and by celebrating where each student is. In the presence of greatness and height, students become conscious of their own slender resources, and will then not take on anything beyond their power, but learn to rejoice what is given them in their measure. Humility will also lead to gratitude—gratitude even for those friends whose gifts and capacities surpass our own. Sertillanges writes, “In face of others’ superiority, there is only one honorable attitude, to be glad of it, and then it becomes our own joy, our own good fortune.” On the other hand we can also celebrate each milestone and stage a person finds themselves. Greatness and present perspective helps each person cultivate a true sense of humility that does not lead to thinking despairingly of oneself.

Patience: This entails bearing difficulties well, enduring the hardship and “suffering” that does come occasionally (and sometimes regularly) as part of learning new skills and acquiring new knowledge.

Constancy: Keeping steady at task and remaining focused and diligent is what constancy is about. This virtue enables students to push away even “good” distractions that would inhibit learning and mastery.

Perseverance: Similar to constancy, but this virtue requires a willful spirit to do what must be done, and even to love what must be done (remind us that love is a master virtue). Students will be motivated and inspired to persevere by the vision of mastery, capacity, and wisdom that teachers lay before their eyes. Small wins and slowly increasing capacity will also kindle perseverance, constancy, and patience.

Temperance/Studiousness: Students need to avoid excessive negligence (laziness) and excessive curiosity and ambition (vain ambition and overreach). To master an art, students must walk the wise, proven path, starting at the beginning and mastering each step. To leap ahead (even when they can to some degree) does damage to the necessary discipline of mastering an art. Sertillanges says, “If you want to see things grow big, plant small,” and go to the sea by way of the streams and rivers—it is folly to go jump in the sea. Recall as well the Tortoise and the Hare. Students also must balance or temper their studies with other academic work, and with their other responsibilities and human being (good exercise, prayer, worship, family living, and contributions, etc.).

2. List of Vices

Pride: Drives students to love their own opinions and thoughts such that they cannot learn from others or discern the broader wisdom from other minds that would inform them.

Envy: Agitates the mind by refusing to honor the gifts and capacities of others; hinders students from learning from other honorable and able students.

Sloth/Laziness: Where the good gifts and capacities of students go to die.

Sensuality: Indulgence in sensuality (not only of the sexual variety) creates lethargy, befogs the imagination, dulls the intelligence, and scatters the memory; sensuality distracts from learning.

Irritation/Impatience: Irritation and impatience repels exhortation, direction, and constructive criticism and thus leads students to less mastery and increased error.

Excessive Ambition (a form of intemperance): Leads students to leap ahead of their capacity without true mastery and integration (often out of pride), which ultimately slows down learning and leads to patchy, nonintegrated understanding.

All of these vices compromise a student’s ability to attend, to judge/assess, and therefore to truly know. All of these vices also tend to come together and lead to one another—they are interconnected.

3. Teaching the Virtues

These virtues are not so much taught as they are cultivated and modeled. We should make students aware of these virtues and we should in fact occasionally teach them directly. However, it is very important that students begin to hunger for these virtues themselves, and cry out to God for them. This seems to be the point of Proverbs 2—if a student won’t cry aloud for wisdom and seek it as hidden treasure, he won’t ever get it. Therefore (among other things we do), we must exhort our students to ask God for virtue and wisdom—a prayer He delights to answer (James 1).

Scholé Core Curriculum

Scope and Sequence

As an excellent homeschool co-op, each SG will need a clear, meaningful and classical course of studies. The old Latin word *curriculum* means a race course, so academically speaking we want to take our students through a meaningful course—but we don't want to race. To change metaphors, our course should be more like a stroll through a garden—a garden of delight.

In any event, the course or path we take our students down should be clear; it should be tried and proven. Not every detail must be planned ahead of time, but the key spots and visitations should be laid out. On any good walk there may be digressions, but the main path is known.

Each SG will therefore share a common path with all other SGs, but no SG need be identical in all the details. What we lay out here is the common path every SG will follow; each director may create various excursions as wisdom dictates.

We only require each SG to teach a core sequence of Latin or Greek, logic, writing, and rhetoric (using any published materials you would like) as well as a commitment to teach “the great books,” mathematics, and science. The chart below indicates this core sequence.

NOTE: While an SG will follow the sequence below, it will not necessarily offer all of the courses in a weekly meeting (or meetings). Families can provide the courses/teaching on their own, via online teaching or other in-person instruction.

Partners and Participants: An individual SG may admit families as participants that do not follow all the teaching in the core sequence. For example, a family may wish to take a class a la carte, or take most of the courses but not all. SGs should ensure that no more than thirty percent of their families are participants and encourage these families to become partners when they are able to do so.

A. The Required Core Curriculum for a SG

Required Core Sequence				
K	Two years of Latin or Greek Grammar + Two years of Writing	Arithmetic		
1		Arithmetic		
2		Arithmetic		
3		Arithmetic		
4		Arithmetic		Great Books
5		Arithmetic		Great Books
6		Arithmetic		Great Books
7	Two years of Latin or Greek Grammar + Two years of Logic + Two years of Rhetoric	Mathematics	Science	Great Books
8		Mathematics	Science	Great Books
9		Mathematics	Science	Great Books
10		Mathematics	Science	Great Books
11		Mathematics	Science	Great Books
12		Mathematics	Science	Great Books

Examples

While this is our required core sequence, we also give space for a more robust curriculum sequence described in the following chart. This is an example from a fellow Scholé Group. Note this is just one example Directors may choose to use any published materials to teach the curriculum.

Please note, the following curriculum guide has been cut into two images for readability. You may find and download this curriculum map as a PDF in the file library at ScholeGroups.com.

		Primary (K-2)			Upper Grammar				
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Piety			Gymnastic		Musica		
Character & Code	Virtue	Learn code & rule	Practice code & rule	Manners I	Manners I	Manners II	Manners II	Relationship Boundaries	
		Various stories	Various stories	Various stories	Various stories	Various stories	Various stories	Various stories	
The Great Conversation	Wisdom								Begin Soc. teaching, participation grades
History		No formal history in K-1: Grammar history builds base of knowledge for U. School			Mesopotamia: Egypt, Patriarchs	Ancient Greece & Rome	Middle Ages	Renaissance	American
The Art of Rhetoric									
		Speech Meet	Speech Meet	Speech Meet	Speech Meet	Speech Meet	Speech Meet	Speech Meet	Speech Meet
Integrated Language: Reading, Writing, Grammar	Skill	Spelling, Printing, Phonics, Reading	Spelling, Denelian, Phonics, Writing & Reading	Shurley, Grammar framework in Latin & English, spelling, reading	Shurley, Grammar framework in Latin & English, cursive, spelling	Shurley, Grammar framework in Latin & English, spelling, reading	Grammar framework in Latin & English, spelling, reading, writing	Grammar framework in Latin & English, spelling, reading, writing	
Logic & Math		Daily Analogies; Puzzles and games during free time; chess club							
Art Practicum: Fine Art, Music, Drama, PE		Children's choir, reproduce great art	Children's choir, reproduce great art	Children's choir, reproduce Egyptian art, Recess PE	Children's choir, reproduce Greek, Roman art, Recess PE	Children's choir, reproduce medieval art, architecture, Recess PE	Children's choir, chime choir, Shakespeare play, reproduce renaissance art, architecture, Recess PE	Children's choir, chime choir, beg. orchestra, reproduce Am. folk art, architecture, Recess PE	
Arithmetic		Singapore	Singapore	Singapore	Singapore	Singapore	Singapore	Singapore	
Science	Knowledge	Birds	Insects, Weather I	Classification: Vertebrate, Invertebrate	Anatomy I, Astronomy I	Weather II, Astronomy II, Animal Review	Botany, geology, chemistry	General Science, Anatomy II	
Aesthetic Literacy: Fine art, Architecture, Music		Impressionists	Impressionists & non-realists	Ancient hieroglyphics Ancient architecture	Greek & Roman sculpture & pottery Greek & Roman architecture	Gothic & Byz. Mosaics	Renaissance painting	American folk art American architecture	
		Hymns	Hymns	Hymns & Psalms	Hymns & Psalms	Hymns & Psalms	Renaissance music	American classical & folk music	
Bible & Western Literacy		Scripture (theme), children's poems & stories	Scripture (theme), children's poems & stories	Scripture (theme), children's poems & stories; classic children's literature	Scripture (theme), children's poems & stories; classic children's literature	Scripture (theme), historical literature, short poetry & passages	Scripture (theme), historical literature, Shakespeare & other poetry	Scripture (theme), historical literature, American short speeches, documents & poems	

Dialectic			Rhetoric			Desired Outcome
7	8	9	10	11	12	
Arts			Philosophy		Theology	
Honor Code & modeling stories on honor	Honor Code & modeling stories on honor	Honor Code & modeling stories on honor	Christian Leadership: Stories on honor	Christian Leadership: Stories on honor	Christian Leadership: Stories on honor	Virtue and mature character
Logic leve discussion of themes from past worldviews like the heroic ethic to put student's own worldview in perspective			Students are taught to connect themes and ideas from across Western civ. to assess their contribution to the great conversation. Readings are typically excerpted.			
Ancient Readings	Medieval Readings	Modern Readings	Ancient Readings	Medieval Readings	Modern Readings	
History is an "Idea Laboratory" providing real-life examples of what happens when ideas work their way into action and the consequences of ideas become real. History is a lab for the great History conversation.						Sound reason and sound faith
Ancient to 300 AD	300 AD to Renaissance	Luther to present	Greek & Roman philosophy	Hist. of the church & western politic	The Renaissance & Enlightenment to modern	
		Writer's Rhetoric	Summa Civitas (Gov.)	Summa Theologica	Summa Philosophia	
Speech Meet II	Speech Meet II	Speech Meet II	Classical Rhetoric	Journalism / Drama / Trial Advocacy		
Typing, Latin, Composition & Grammar framework	Latin, Composition & grammar framework	Grammar	AP Latin I, Greek I	AP Latin II, Greek II	French I	French II
Math Logic, Computer Programming	Algebra I, Logic	Geometry	Algebra II	Trigonometry, Pre-Calc, Statistics	Calculus	Masterful command of language
Chime choir, orchestra, House PE	Chime choir, orchestra, House PE	Chime choir, orchestra, House PE	Chime choir, orchestra, US choir, drama, House PE	Chime choir, orchestra, US choir, drama, House PE	Chime choir, orchestra, US choir, drama, House PE	
Drawing I	Drawing II	Painting I	Painting II	Sculpting I	Sculpting II	Well rounded and competent
Physical Science		Biology	Chemistry	Physics	AP Chemistry or Physics	
Ancient art idenfication	Medieval art identification	Modern art identification	Ancient art appreciation	Medieval early Ren. art appreciation	Enlightenment art appreciation/ 20th cent. art	
Music theory I	Early classical music	Enlightenment classical music	Music theory II	Classical music	20th and 21st cent. music	
Ancient Greek and Roman literature & verse with modern classics relevant to the time period	Medieval literature & verse with modern classics relevant to the time period	Modern literature important to the development of who are as a people and	Read great authors of Wester literature in their entirety to establish literacy in key works			Literature and broad exposure to books; an established aesthetic
			Iconic ancient masterpieces	Iconic medieval masterpieces	Iconic modern masterpieces	

B. Four Levels of Instruction

What follows is a general description of the goals and tenor of each of four levels of instruction within a K–12 Scholé Group. We also have included a “Portrait of a

Scholé Group Graduate” in the appendix that further describes the ideal student we seek to cultivate.

Lower Grammar (K-2): The Cultivation of Wonder and Virtue

During grades K-2 the larger educational aims are the cultivation of wonder and virtue. Students at these ages are naturally filled with wide-eyed wonder at the world, and need that wonder to be protected, cultivated, and extended. As younger children they are also the most receptive to acquiring virtuous habits of learning that will serve the rest of their lives. So while we will teach these students phonics, handwriting, reading, and arithmetic, we will be very intentional about developing them as passionate lovers of truth, goodness, and beauty, and showing them the natural world as a living museum full of wonders that delight the soul. We will also be intentional about cultivating virtues of humility, courage, constancy, and temperance.

During these lower grammar years, it is also the ideal time to acquaint younger students with the pedagogical (teaching methods) wisdom of making haste slowly (*festina lente*), mastering a few things rather than lightly “covering” many (*multum non multa*). Students will learn the virtue of working wisely and well, but without anxiety and exhaustion. Students will focus on a core of three main arts: reading, writing, and arithmetic; additional study in music, fine art, Bible, and nature study will serve to season and delight but not overwhelm. The study of Latin vocabulary (and some conversational Latin) may also be lightly introduced.

Younger students also learn naturally and with delight by means of songs and chants, so we will teach important ideas and information with lots of singing and chanting.

As students learn through all five senses, we will not merely speak truth to them, we will also embody our ideals by sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste. This means we will create meaningful rhythms, practices, routines, and traditions replete with beautiful images, music, and “liturgy.”

Upper Grammar (3-6): The Cultivation of Language, Literature and Number Sense

During grades 3-6, we seek to extend the wonder and virtue education begun in the lower grammar years and “seal” and strengthen students’ wonder and virtue so that they become a permanent aspect of their character. At this time we also begin the dedicated study of grammar, studying both Latin and English grammar. At this time we will reveal to them the wonder of language—how it works as a medium of thought and communication, how it delights the ear, the tongue, and the soul. We will teach grammar as an art that illumines and humanizes, and that provides students with the capacity to acquire wisdom (via reading) and express their ideas and thoughts clearly (via speech and writing).

At this time we will also begin to introduce students to the Great Books, or great literature. Now that students are independent readers, we will give them a steady diet of the best literature—including novels, poetry, and history. For a listing of over 900 vetted great books suitable for a classical education listed by grade, genre and level of difficulty, see ClassicalReader.com. These 900 books are also listed in the printed resource, *The Classical Reader: A Comprehensive Reading Guides for K-12 Students*. Other good lists of great books are also available. We recommend that SG leaders also consult the list of books suggested by David Hicks in the back of his book *Norms and Nobility*.

We will also work to impart mastery of number sense—showing students the wonder of mathematics and giving them a solid understanding of how numbers work (numeracy or number sense). Students will see mathematics as another language to describe the world, something beautiful, something to play with, and something with which to do valuable work.

Beauty: As in the lower grammar period, we will continue to surround students with beautiful art and music and to give ample opportunities for students to engage the beauty of nature outside. All students should begin either to study a musical instrument, sing, or study another fine art such as drawing, dance, or drama.

Dialectic (7-9): The Cultivation of Logic, Collaboration, and Wisdom

During these years, students are ready to argue, debate, deliberate, and collaborate. We will not only teach students logic, but will teach them all subjects using logic as a central teaching tool—which is to say we will teach dialectically. Teachers will in particular employ the study of the informal fallacies in every subject, helping students analyze arguments for potential fallacies. Teachers will teach primarily by utilizing effective discussion and debate rather than by lecture.

Students in this period also naturally enjoy collaborating with their peers, discussing important issues, deliberating ideas, and working together on projects, presentations, and assignments.

During this time, students will begin to study the traditional mathematical arts of algebra and geometry (though geometry may be studied in grade 10), mastering the functions, ideas, and language of these arts. Students will also begin the study of natural philosophy (natural sciences), including geology and botany.

This is the time to begin to study history, literature, and theology for the ideas they contain and the wisdom they can impart. History becomes the study of the ongoing story of human acts and civilization, and the great deeds and virtues of the past—a source of wisdom. Literature is studied for truth, goodness, and beauty as students seek the best that has been thought and said. Theology provides the coherent framework as God’s revelation that brings unity to all knowledge and experience,

and thus is the “queen” of the other arts and disciplines and a chief source of wisdom.

Rhetoric (10-12): The Cultivation of Rhetoric and Art (Making)

During these years, students are ready to employ their past learning to meaningful work, art, music, writing, and speech—they want to begin making a contribution to their surrounding community and culture. The study of rhetoric formally enables this as students study what makes for effective, beautiful, and persuasive speech and writing. Rhetoric students, therefore, are frequently asked to speak, write, share, and create. As emerging adults, they take more responsibility for teaching younger students, and find that they master learning best by teaching others (*docendo discimus*, by teaching we learn).

Students in the rhetoric years will continue their study of the traditional mathematical and scientific arts, and will study geometry, trigonometry, and calculus, and biology, chemistry, and physics. Some students may wish or need to forgo the study of calculus or physics or delay their study until college. The study of the mathematical and scientific arts, far from being merely a study of truth, will also engage students in imagination, beauty, and creativity.

As more responsible, well-trained students, these students will wisely engage in contemplation (*scholé*, contemplation and leisure) and discussion with fellow students, teachers, and adults. Rhetoric students will regularly read and discuss the Great Books that are part of their courses, eagerly engaging in conversation and written papers in response to these books.

As students growing in wisdom, these students will begin the formal study of philosophy and theology for which their previous study has prepared them. The study of philosophy and theology will engage them in the great questions of human existence about living a “good life” characterized by wisdom, virtue, and eloquence and engage them in the Great Conversation at a mature level.

Rhetoric students will conclude their studies by completing a “capstone” project or thesis that will display a synthesis of the learning over their K-12 years, and represent a meaningful, creative contribution to their community. This project will be accompanied by a prepared paper and speech that will employ the rhetorical training of the graduating student.

C. Format and Elements of SG Campus Days

A Scholé Group may choose from a one-day, day-and-a-half, or two-day-a-week collective learning format. Each format will have its advantages and disadvantages, either arranging for more or less time during which students will be taught at home

rather than in a collective, group setting. The main focus of the group or community learning will be the core sequence curriculum (Latin, grammar, writing, logic, and rhetoric, great books, mathematics, and science).

Emphasis: By configuring a one-day, day-and-a-half or two-day format, a SG may choose to emphasize certain aspects of learning. For example, by choosing to do a second day (or second half day), a SG could emphasize the study of the fine arts (drama, music, drawing), or nature study/science (field trips, nature walks, collecting and observation, extended labs), or dialectic (planned deliberations and debates), or rhetoric (prepared speeches, speech meets).

Scholé Learning: As a SG, groups will naturally want to ensure restful learning throughout the day. This means creating meaningful gathering and assemblies and liturgical rhythms and practices through the day, characterized by peace in a setting that is as beautiful as you can make it. Beautiful music, peaceful transitions (think monastic bells, chimes), liturgical greetings (“Peace be with you”—“And also with you”), blessings, confessions, and expressions of thanksgiving and gratitude can contribute to this atmosphere. Dismissals should be benedictions—a good word of blessing spoken to the children as they are sent back into the ministry and mission of their own homes. Especially for younger children (grammar school students), outside play should be planned with ample time (thirty minutes is ideal). For younger students, play is integral to learning, and students will especially enjoy free play with their SG peers. If possible, secure a facility/space that contains a playground or outdoor space for play. If not, playtime indoors should be arranged.

Assembly and Prayers: Gathering assemblies will be critical to setting the tone for a SG, for communicating purpose and vision and for cultivating community. Assemblies should be carefully and thoughtfully planned and include liturgical elements from the Christian ecclesial tradition such as salutation, greetings, thanksgiving, confession, praise, and petition. This is an ideal time to incorporate student musicians (along with parents) for singing and playing. Students can memorize and recite prayers, scripture, and creeds during this time. The assembly may also be used for student exhibitions as the celebration of learning (see below).

Exhibitions/Celebrations of Learning: Students should be given regular opportunity to bless others with the knowledge, capacities, insights, and skills they are acquiring. The logical time to do this is during the morning assembly, though students can share during lunch or other times set apart. Student exhibitions should be set up and contextualized as celebrations of the joy of learning rather than the adulation of a particular student (which so easily leads to pride in one student and despair in another). Grammar school students can recite or sing memorized information (Latin paradigms, history timelines, science and math facts, scripture, poetry, etc.). Dialectic students can identify, analyze, and explain a fallacy they have discovered in their reading or observations, host a brief debate or deliberation, or summarize a book they have recently read. Rhetoric students can give short

speeches, perform brief one-act plays, recite original poetry, and the like. All students can sing and play the instruments they are learning.

Older Serving the Younger: The schedule should be created so that older students are studying the same arts/subject that younger students are studying. This will provide an opportunity for older students to occasionally help teach younger students. For example, dialectic Latin students can prepare lessons to teach the grammar school students. This will help build community and relationships, and will also enable older students to further master their own learning (*docendo discimus*, by teaching we learn).

Scholé Lunch: Lunch should not be viewed as free-for-all “fueling time.” Lunch should be thoughtfully planned as a time of leisure, good discussion, delight, good food, and refreshment. If possible place students at several small tables (round is best!). Try to make lunch as beautiful as time and resources permit: a potluck approach can work well, with tablecloths, candles, and real silverware. If you can, feature live music played by a parent or student each week. Occasionally have a “reading lunch” in which a great story is read by a parent or competent student for the first half of lunch. The story will often lead to meaningful conversation afterward. Experiment with an occasional silent lunch (listening to music or a story being read). Consider assigning “conversation topics” to each table (or the same topic to each table) to guide meaningful conversation during lunch. It can also be helpful to provide guidance and variety regarding seating arrangements. On some days you could surprise students with name cards at each setting. On other days you could designate tables by conversation topic, by grade, by age, by birth months, by eye color, etc. It is often wise to have an adult join a table with students rather than to have the parents and students eat separately. In any case, it is wise to have theme and variety for lunch—one week lunch may vary in certain aspects but it should always be restful, leisurely (take thirty minutes or more), and refreshing.

1. One-Day-a-Week Sample Format

This format (and all formats listed) is presented as a sample, not a required format. The samples are intended to generate ideas for various SGs. We expect that SG leaders will include additional format ideas both here in the handbook and post them in our [File Library](#) online.

Parents, students, and teachers (often parents) gather at a suitable location that will facilitate restful learning (*scholé*). The gathering day could begin at approximately 9 a.m. and conclude at 3 p.m. During this time, the core sequence arts may be offered to students in class periods of thirty minutes for grammar schools students and sixty minutes for dialectic and rhetoric students.

Sample One-Day Format				
	Lower Grammar	Upper Grammar	Dialectic	Rhetoric
9:00 AM	Salutation/Assembly/Exhibitions			
9:30 AM	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Mathematics	Mathematics
10:00 AM	Latin Beginnings	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar
10:30 AM	Phonics	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar
11:00 AM	Free (play outside)	Free (play outside)	Great Books	Great Books
11:30 AM	Writing	Writing	Great Books	Great Books
12:00 PM	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch
12:30 PM	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Logic	Rhetoric
1:00 PM	Free (play outside)	Free (play outside)	Logic	Rhetoric
1:30 PM	Literature	Literature	Science	Science
2:00 PM	Nature Study	Nature Study	Science	Science
2:30 PM	Bible	Bible	Philosophy	Theology
3:00 PM	Benediction			

2. Two-Days-a-Week Sample Format

For a two-day-per-week format, a SG may simply duplicate the one-day schedule, perhaps adding some additional courses outside the course sequence curriculum, such as music, history, drama, and fine art. Naturally, SGs that choose a two-day format will employ more teaching during these two days, making for less teaching done in the home (three days instead of four). Some SGs that move to a two-day format may also choose to grow into a larger campus and call themselves a University Model School (UMS). This model has grown in recent years and follows the university model not by offering college-level courses but by modeling the amount of time that college students normally spend in class in a given week (typically 15 hours). Thus by having students in class for two days (and approximately 10-12 hours), students are mimicking this pattern. Students (younger

students in particular) will still be instructed by parents during the three days they are at home, however, and not working solely on their own.

Sample Day Two Format (Fine Arts Emphasis)				
	Lower Grammar	Upper Grammar	Dialectic	Rhetoric
9:00 AM	Salutation/Assembly/Exhibitions			
9:30 AM	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Mathematics	Mathematics
10:00 AM	Latin Beginnings	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar
10:30 AM	Phonics	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar
11:00 AM	Free (play outside)	Free (play outside)	Great Books	Great Books
11:30 AM	Writing	Writing	Great Books	Great Books
12:00 PM	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch
12:30 PM	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Logic	Rhetoric
1:00 PM	Free (play outside)	Free (play outside)	Logic	Rhetoric
1:30 PM	Drama	Drama	Drama	Drama
2:00 PM	Drama	Drama	Drama	Drama
2:30 PM	Music	Music	Music	Music
3:00 PM	Benediction			

3. One-and-a-Half-Day-a-Week Sample Format

For formats of this type, a SG may either extend the study of the core sequence from the one-day schedule, or possibly add some additional courses outside the core sequence curriculum, such as music, history, drama, and fine art.

Sample Half-Day Format (Fine Arts Emphasis)				
	Lower Grammar	Upper Grammar	Dialectic	Rhetoric
11:30 AM	Salutation/Assembly/Exhibitions			

12:00 PM	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch
12:30 PM	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Logic	Rhetoric
1:00 PM	Free (play outside)	Free (play outside)	Logic	Rhetoric
1:30 PM	Drama	Drama	Drama	Drama
2:00 PM	Drama	Drama	Drama	Drama
2:30 PM	Music	Music	Music	Music
3:00 PM	Benediction			

D. Modes of Meeting: Face-to-Face and Virtual Modes

We recommend that the majority of teaching be done face to face (FTF). No teaching mode is superior to a talented, loving teacher working face to face with a student. However, virtual learning should be considered as a meaningful complement to FTF teaching in certain situations. Live online teaching (OL) and online self-paced teaching (OSP) offer some advantages to families when a qualified teacher is not available for FTF teaching or when convenience (due to time, scheduling, or location) make either OL or OSP teaching a wise choice. Sometimes online teaching, or self-paced teaching materials (with built-in video teaching) can also be integrated with the FTF teaching provided by SG teachers. For example, the Latin for Children materials can be taught by FTF teacher during a SG gathering, but then used at home under the guidance of the parent-teacher during the week.

As a result, we suggest that a SG assess the relative merits of blending some online teaching with FTF teaching, based on the circumstances, needs, and interests of the families in the SG. For example, some SGs lacking a qualified dialectic Latin teacher locally may choose to have students take their Latin course online. Some SGs may even arrange for the online Latin teacher to teach the SG students during the time they are gathered together.

We recommend that SGs provide at least seventy-five percent of instruction as FTF. Younger students especially need FTF instruction; older students are better able to profit from various forms of online teaching. Here is what a one-day schedule might look like, blended with online teaching.

Sample One-Day Format (with some online teaching)				
	Lower Grammar	Upper Grammar	Dialectic	Rhetoric

9:00 AM	Salutation/Assembly/Exhibitions			
9:30 AM	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Mathematics	Mathematics
10:00 AM	Latin Beginnings	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar <small>online</small>	Latin Grammar
10:30 AM	Phonics	Latin Grammar	Latin Grammar <small>online</small>	Latin Grammar
11:00 AM	Free (play outside)	Free (play outside)	Great Books	Great Books
11:30 AM	Writing <small>online</small>	Writing <small>online</small>	Great Books	Great Books
12:00 PM	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch
12:30 PM	Scholé Lunch	Scholé Lunch	Logic	Rhetoric <small>online</small>
1:00 PM	Free (play outside)	Free (play outside)	Logic	Rhetoric <small>online</small>
1:30 PM	Literature	Literature	Science	Science
2:00 PM	Nature Study	Nature Study	Science	Science
2:30 PM	Bible	Bible	Philosophy	Theology
3:00 PM	Benediction			

Part Two: Communal Perspective

I. Community: The People of a Scholé Group

A. Introduction

C. S. Lewis says somewhere that “we go nowhere alone.” The Apostle Paul makes it quite clear that the church is a body with many members, and that each member has an important role to play for the good of the whole body. In Paul’s words: “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” (1 Cor. 12:12, ESV).

The classical tradition of education has almost universally advocated a communal approach to education in which the church, family, and community groups all work together to raise up and educate a child. This was embedded in the Hebrew approach in which those in covenant with God collaborated via worship, feasts, and community and family rhythms to raise up the children of the covenant community. Deuteronomy 6 is one notable example of this covenantal approach: “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” (Deut. 6:6,7, ESV).

This communal approach was also encouraged by the Greeks and is integral to the Greek word for education--*paideia* (pie-DAY-uh). This rich Greek word is related to Greek word for child--*pais*, *paidos*. At the heart of *paideia* is the idea of raising up and maturing a human being from a child to full adulthood, fully prepared to serve the Greek city state and vote in the assembly. This educational process was the responsibility of the Greek community generally, and not just the schoolmaster or the parents.

The New Testament advocates a similar approach, though makes the responsibility of parents prime, especially that of fathers. Paul writes, “Fathers do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:4, ESV). The Greek word translated “discipline” in this verse is *paideia*. For Paul there is a “*paideia* of the Lord.” While parents have the main responsibility for raising up and educating their children, they cannot do so without the body of Christ, and the body of Christ, the church, joins with parents to raise up the sons and daughters of the church. Historically, it is no surprise that churches, families, homeschools, schools and monasteries have all served together in various ways to educate the children of the church.

B. Curriculum and Community

The classical curriculum of the seven liberal arts and the great books is integral to classical, liberal education. However, the liberal arts and the great books are like seeds that will only sprout and grow in the soil of a rich and robust community. Put another way, if we do not educate in a loving community we are in danger of violating Paul's rule of love in 1 Cor. 13 and therefore "gaining nothing" for all of our efforts to "understand all mysteries and knowledge." In a similar vein, it may be that to educate children without love may render a man "a more clever devil." (a statement often attributed to C. S. Lewis). Another way of saying this is there are two paths to the curriculum. The giving path and the receiving path. A classical education is more completely received when given back to the community in service as a response to what one has received.

Thus we can argue for the primacy of a loving community to complete a classical curriculum. A robust classical curriculum without a loving community is dysfunctional and at cross purposes--confused and contradictory. Scholé Groups should therefore make every effort to cultivate a community of love, collaboration and fellowship, with the love of Christ at the center of all activity and learning.

C. Cultivating Community

A community of love must be cultivated, much like cultivating a garden. We must be intentional, as a vibrant community does not just spontaneously appear any more than a lovely garden will blossom after merely throwing seeds on the ground. We must carefully till, plant, fertilize, water and weed. If we plan our curriculum intentionally (with documents, training, assessments), should we not plan for community as well with the same zeal, focus and attention? Scholé Group leaders should be regularly thinking, planning and assessing the development of the community.

There are several things that most SG communities should pursue to develop and preserve a vibrant community.

Warm Greetings: Someone should be appointed to ensure that every parent and child is welcomed to any SG event--whether a community/campus day meeting or an information night or training event. Much like a host or hostess at fine restaurant or greeters at a church, someone should be appointed to welcome and greet people as they arrive to any SG event. SG Directors of course should play an important role in bringing warm greetings to all. These greetings should be planned and considered so as to truly bless those who are welcomed. Teachers or tutor should also warmly greet students when they come to class--following the "liturgical learning" format that we encourage.

Refreshments: It shows hospitality, thoughtfulness and love to provide food and drink to those with whom we serve. It does not cost too much to have coffee and tea regularly available for adults, as well as some light food.

Music: Music does a great deal to set a tone and signal to us (almost unconsciously) the import of our gathering and activity. While live music is best, carefully selecting recorded beautiful, appropriate music will bless others and show thoughtfulness.

Regular and Clear Communication: Regular memos or newsletters, a clear and updated website--these will help parents and students to feel secure, cared for and served. Good communication will also prevent misunderstandings and conflict and thus help the community to spend more time enjoying the mission and activities of an SG. If community is primary, then our memos, emails and websites should emphasize, extend, cultivate and preserve community. In addition, this cultivates a trustworthy ethos between leadership and parents.

Celebration: When the community gathers, there will often be things to celebrate and for which to thank God. Leaders should be on the lookout for the blessings that are present in the community and highlight them for the edification of the larger community. We do not, however, encourage awards for student achievement (with ribbons, medals and the like). We do encourage commendation and praise that directs the entire community to give thanks to God who is responsible for the individual gifts that each student possesses, and even for his student's ability to exercise those gifts.

Liturgical Learning: The Scholé Groups Network advocates a liturgical learning approach in which the ecclesial and liturgical traditions of the church inform the way we conduct classes. This same liturgical approach should inform the way we conduct ourselves outside of the classroom. We list the elements of liturgical learning elsewhere in this document, but here are the essential liturgical elements that could inform and be adapted for any activity in a SG:

Welcome/Greeting: 3 minutes (students greeted by beautiful images and music, possibly with a inspirational quotation or key question; 3 minutes of contemplation before official start)

Grateful Acknowledgment: 2 minutes (of the art, one another, the opportunity to study some aspect of God's creation, the mind, nature, humanity)

Confess What We Need: 2 minutes (disposition, frame of mind, virtue, heart that seeks and calls out for wisdom; a written confession can be read and/or prayer offered); key Scripture: Proverbs 2:1-7

Teach/Present/Discuss: 50-60 minutes (traditional lesson, led by the teacher, ensuring that all students are engaged and participating)

Confess What We Know/Have Learned: 2 minutes (summary and review taking the form of “creedal” confession that edifies)

Expression of Thanksgiving: 2-3 minutes (led by teacher or mature student, but giving opportunity for all students to express gratitude to God, teacher, other students)

Benediction/Dismissal: 1 minute (prepared benediction written by teacher, or from traditional sources).

Processional: 3 minutes (return to beautiful music and images; students free to leave immediately, or remain for quiet contemplation).

Scholé and Community

This liturgical approach is one important way of implementing scholé in our communities. Our meetings and gatherings should not be rushed and harried, but restful and relaxed. It is very important that we model scholé in all aspects of our community life and activities.

Community Planning and Assessment

In conclusion, we think that it is very important to thoughtfully plan for community cultivation and to regularly assess how well the community is developing. Therefore, “community cultivation” should make it onto our planning agendas and be discussed and assessed. Ultimately, what keeps parents and students connected and happy with a SG is not primarily the classical curriculum (as important as that it is) but rather a vibrant, delightful community and fellowship.

II. Calling & Culture

What is Culture?: A culture is what develops over time as a well-led community grows with each part playing its role faithfully and in love. In time, new people who come into a community culture will perceive its distinctive elements and be shaped by them. In other words, a developed culture will have its own shaping, forming power and its own perpetuating momentum. It will also have a kind of attractive power--people will observe it and be drawn to it.

Culture-Making Essentials: The way that a culture is established is by the regular engagement of pursuing a vibrant community. In effect, a well-cultivated community becomes a culture. What a SG community regards as excellent, wise and virtuous should slowly become embedded in the rhythms, routines, practices and traditions of the community. That which becomes embedded, become the community culture. How do we grow our community into a culture?

Chose Those Things That Are Distinctive and Important--and Privilege Them. What you privileged should be noted and lifted up, and regularly talked about and discussed, and almost always present.

Don't Chose 23 Distinctive Elements. We all know that if everything is important, then nothing is important. Every SG should value and privilege the importance of scholé/restful learning--and perhaps liturgical learning. What will be a few other distinctive elements of your SG?

Embody Your Distinctive Elements in Your Mission Statement. Once you have created a list of 4-5 distinctive elements, why not incorporate them into a mission statement that will give everyone in your SG guidance and orientation?

Ensure That Someone is Responsible. Mission statements often become a slogan on a website that does not truly form and orient an organization. The SD Director or someone else in leadership should be regularly reviewing the way in which your SG distinctive elements are being worked through the community.

Assess and Recalibrate. Why not ask the question whenever the leaders gather for planning and assessment: How are we doing in implementing our SG privileged principles throughout our SG? What can we do to improve and enhance our implementation?

Part Three: Formal/Administrative Perspective

The Management of the Scholé Group

I. Operations and Policy

A. Introduction

A SG, no matter how small or large, deserves to be operated and managed well. To do this means we want to have people deployed wisely to serve the SG--getting the right people on the right seats, to paraphrase Jim Collins in his book *Good to Great*. It also means that we will need to make use of the best or right tools to help administer our SG, and to put clear and wise policies in place to guide our management and operations of the group.

No doubt, smaller groups will be easier to manage, but even small groups should take time to plan and administer their groups with excellence. Paul exhorts us to manage church affairs with decency and order (1 Cor. 14:40), and the same should apply to our homeschool communities--small or large.

Some SG Directors will have prior experience in organizational management and practices, in which case much of what follows will be familiar. Still, as in any business or organization, there are particular “business” facets and “best practices” that should be mastered. Those who do not have much or any prior business experience will want to study what follows carefully. It is also wise to form a team of leaders or advisors that will include those with practical management experience.

B. Management Tools

There are several tools that will help make the administration and management of your SG much easier. We encourage you to consider each of these.

GoogleDocs: GoogleDocs is a free, online, cloud-based, file storage and management solution that includes 15GB of storage space. Many small and large businesses use this solution for managing files of all kinds (Word documents, spreadsheets, PDFs, audio and video).

Basecamp for Project Management: Basecamp is an online, cloud-based management solution that is intuitive, beautiful and easy-to-use. What’s more, it is integrated with GoogleDocs. Learn more here: <https://basecamp.com/>

Your Own SG Website: Another important tool for managing your SG is your own SG website. Groups with more than ten families will derive a great deal of benefit and value by using such site. The site will enable you to post your school calendar, homework assignments, parent/student applications, important files and documents, and contact information. The site can become a communication hub for current families and also promotional tool for attracting new families. To see a demo of the site that the SG Network recommends to new SGs, click here: <http://demo.scholegroups.com/>

ScholeGroups.com: Another important management tool is the ScholeGroups.com website. We have designed this website to provide SG Directors and parents with many useful resources, which we update regularly. You will want to familiarize the site and take advantage of the following: the file library (featuring documents uploaded from the SG Network and various SG Directors from around the country), the forums, archived training webinars, blogs and commentary.

ClassicalU.com: The many courses and resources on ClassicalU.com are available at a discount to SG Directors and SG parents. The leadership level (Level L) of ClassicalU includes training and resources pertinent to SG Directors.

Webinars: We schedule live webinars for SG Directors throughout the year. We encourage you to join these live webinars to get ongoing training and also to meet and develop friendship with other SG Directors. All webinars are recorded and archived, but attending a live webinar is optimal.

Books: There are many good books on management, but we like two in particular that we recommend to all SG Directors: 1) [*The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business*](#) by Patrick Lencioni. This book describes how to build a cohesive leadership team, create clarity, overcommunicate clarity, and reinforce clarity. 2) [*Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't*](#) by Jim Collins. This best-selling book presents and explains several key principles for managing and leading well including the importance of recruiting or hiring great people (first who...then what), confronting the brutal facts (coming to a deep understanding of reality), cultivating a culture of discipline, building and keeping momentum (pushing on the flywheel).

C. Foundational Documents

Mission Statement: It can be helpful for a SG to create a mission statement in order to focus the activity and work of the group. This can be helpful to communicate to prospective families the distinctive elements of your SG. We recommend that you consult the mission and description of ScholeGroups.com (under the About Us section) and revise the language there to describe your own SG. Mission statements are generally brief and describe your driving purpose. A vision statement generally describes your envisioned future, or what you hope will happen over time as you pursue your mission.

The SG Handbook: This very handbook can be considered one of your foundational documents that gives some general and specific guidance to you as you operate and cultivate your SG.

The SG Curriculum Guide: This guide is designed to give you specific guidance on how to implement a classical curriculum in your SG. It is designed to be a practical document that will provide tutors and teachers with guidance and direction as they teach particular courses. All tutors and teachers should have a copy of this guide. *This guide is forthcoming. In the meantime, we recommend taking a look at The Ambrose Curriculum Guide—a comprehensive K–12 curriculum developed by a leading classical school. The Ambrose Curriculum Guide is available to subscribers of ClassicalU.com.*

Student/Family Application: You should create an application for any family wishing to join your SG. The application should contain your mission statement or description of your SG, parental responsibilities and expectations, student behavior expectations, tuition schedule, and a brief description of services that you provide. Samples of a SG application can be found in the File Library on ScholēGroups.com.

Portrait of a Teacher, Portrait of a Graduate: We think it is very helpful to create a one or two page document that describes an ideal teacher and another document that describes an ideal student or graduate. This exercise shows everyone what it is you are seeking--what kind of student you hope to cultivate together. Since a student, when he is fully-trained, will be like his teacher (Luke 6:40), it is also helpful to consider what characterizes an ideal teacher.

Forming a Legal Proprietorship or Partnership: If you wish to operate your Scholé Group as a for-profit or non-profit business, you will need to file registration documents, usually with your department of state within your state. This is fairly easy to do and most states have a website with directions for filing and links to downloadable documents. Most SG's will likely not seek to be a non-profit organization unless you have plans to grow your SG to a significant size and govern the SG by a board (which is required for non-profit organizations). In most cases individuals want to register as a sole proprietorship or an LLC (limited liability company).

D. Business Structure

Sole Proprietorship: This is an ideal SG business set-up for an SG that will be owned and managed primarily by one person or family. A sole proprietor may hire others to help with the business of the SG, but does not have business partners who are co-owners of the business. This type of company does not usually offer legal protection to the owners.

Limited Liability Partnership (LLP): This is a suitable option for a group of people who want to be in business together, sharing ownership and the responsibility for managing

and operating a SG as a business. LLPs do not report income to the IRS, rather any earnings are channeled to the individual partner/owners who declare those earnings on their tax returns. An LLP must declare one of its owners to be the managing partner of the LLP.

Limited Liability Company (LLC): The LLC is very much like a partnership, and can be taxed as one for federal purposes. Though this structure can also provide additional protection for the owners, it is usually often chosen for entities with multiple members.

E. Group Structure & Size

Operating a Small Scholé Group (nonbusiness)

Many of the Scholé Groups in our network are small groups not exceeding thirty students. The leaders of these groups tend to operate the group in a more informal manner without the traditional trappings of a business.

Operating a Large Scholé Group (business)

We also have in our network a number of Scholé Groups that exceed thirty students and therefore require some practices and policies that take on a “business” dimension. Larger groups normally have to rent a meeting space, which requires a lease arrangement, insurance, and the like. Larger groups also generally end up hiring services for things like child care, facility cleaning, administrative help, and tutoring.

F. Communication Practices

A SG, like any well-run organization, should be excellent at communicating with SG members and prospective members.

Communication “Manager”

A new and small SG will likely feature a Director who wears many hats including the “communication manager” hat. Still it is important that someone takes on responsibility for ensuring good communications within and without the SG. Here are some important practices and tools for ensuring excellent communication:

Bi-weekly Memo: A brief memo sent out to members every two weeks will help keep everyone well-informed. The memo should contain important group and logistical information such as: meeting times, changes, new students, curriculum ordering, special events and the like.

Monthly Newsletter: A brief monthly newsletter should be emailed once a month that might contain brief student or family profiles, descriptions of coming events and

opportunities, teacher profiles, links to articles, resources, books, websites and conferences, a brief letter from the SG Director.

SG Academic Assignments: Via Website or Schoology: Academic assignments should be posted by teachers for easy online access by students and their parents. This can be done via a free service like GoogleDocs or the free version of Schoology (recommended). Assignments can also be posted via the SG website template provided for free to all new SGs.

Information Nights/Community Meetings: Information Nights or “Open House” events are very helpful for building community and reaching out to prospective families. These events should be carefully planned and involve as much “showing” as telling. In other words, have the students present their learning (recitations, singing, playing music, drama, debate, speeches, etc.) and take questions from the audience. Do this in addition to having the Director give an overview and welcome. Consider having a parent give a kind of “parent testimony” and take a few questions. If possible, design a one-page flyer or a brochure that prospective parents can take come with them.

Email: Email is a common and effective way of communicating--as long as no one is upset or emotional. Once someone is upset is it always best to talk on the phone or meet in person.

SG Website: A clean, attractive website will do much to facilitate good communication and to attract prospective families (if desired). The website does several things at once: it is a means of casting vision; attracting new families; encouraging current families and students, and building community; setting expectations; coordinating calendar events, logistics; communicating assignments and due dates for academic work; facilitating discussion and the exchange of ideas; sharing important documents. The Scholé Groups Network provides new SGs with a website with the important features and functions a SG will need. You can view a demo of this website template here: [Scholé Groups Demo Website](#).

SG Facebook Page: A Facebook page can also be used to create conversation and community surrounding your SG, and can be linked to your website. You can easily and quickly set up a free Facebook site for your group by following these steps from Facebook.com: [Setting up a Group Facebook site](#).

G. Facilities

Securing a facility if needed

Small SGs consisting of 3-6 families often meet for a weekly “community day” (sometimes two days per week) at a family home. Larger groups may want to secure a larger space for their community day meetings. Most larger groups have rented space from local churches for this purpose. This makes good sense for four reasons: 1) almost all churches have unused space available during the week 2) churches are usually supportive of Christian

education and thus the SG mission 3) churches appreciate additional rental income 4) churches that support the SG mission will often discount the rental price and sometimes offer the space at no charge.

Relations with the church/landlord

It is very important to create clear and specific expectation for how the space will be used. The following practices should be carefully followed: 1) An agreement should be signed to ensure clarity (even if there is no charge) 2) The space should be left in better condition than when it was found 3) A diagram for how the space should look for church use and SG use should be used weekly and if possible posted on a wall. 4) The SG Director should identify the church's main contact for using the space and initiate and maintain a healthy, pleasant professional relationship. The Director should ask the contact "how things are going" on a regular basis to ensure that the SG is meeting the expectations of the church for SG's use of the space. 5) Students and parents should be clearly (and regularly) instructed about proper etiquette and behavior in the church space. 6) Students, who will want to run about and play, should be given opportunity to do so in an appropriate space (preferably outside or in a church gym if available). Young students will have a difficult time spending most of the day inside a church facility and behaving properly if they don't have opportunity to play and run.

II. Financial Model

Budget and Accounting (Sample Budget in Appendix)

There is a business side to operating a SG--even a small one consisting of 3-5 families. Expenses will need to be anticipated and planned for; the Director and families will need to make plans for paying for these expenses, usually in the form of family contributions in the form of fees or tuition. A budget with income and expenses should be created; fees and tuition should be set so that income will cover expenses. A typical budget might include the following items:

Income

- Tuition fee per family
- Curriculum fee (if ordering as a group)
- Childcare fee

Donations

Expenses

Payroll: Payment to tutors
Payroll: Payment to SG Director
Teaching Training
Facility Rental
Childcare (during community day)
Curriculum (if ordered as a group)
Insurance (liability insurance)

Taxes

If you operate your SG as a sole proprietorship, or limited liability company, you will need to maintain a budget to determine if you owe taxes on any net income (profit). You would also be subject to self-employment taxes. The aforementioned points are not intended to be tax or legal advice, and it is very important that you work with your own accountant or tax prepared to make these decisions.

Reports

The SG Director should present monthly (or at least quarterly) financial reports to any leadership team that has been established. The report should indicate income and expenses, noting any abnormal expenses or income, and noting the current deficit or surplus. A brief financial report should probably be made to the entire parent community at least once per year.

Insurance

It is a wise idea for SG to secure liability insurance to protect the SG in the event that any parent or student is injured or abused during the operations of the SG. Such insurance is normally not too expensive, but the Director should consult a local insurance agent for guidance.

Banking

The SG Director should open up a distinct business account for managing all the finances of the SG. This account should also have an associated check/debit card in order to facilitate online purchases.

Income and Expenses

For a small SG, setting and managing income and expenses will be fairly simple. Larger SGs will include more individual "line items" on both the income and expense sections of a budget, and will need more attentive management.

Setting Tuition and Scholarships

The best way to set tuition is to clearly forecast expenses and then ensure that tuition, family fees and donations cover expenses leaving a surplus of 5%-10%. The most costly expenses will be 1) paying tutors (if applicable) 2) paying for curriculum materials, and 3)

paying rent for a facility (if applicable) 4) paying for teacher development and training (e.g., the yearly fee for access to ClassicalU.com).

It is wise to carefully forecast/project all expenses then set fees and tuition at 110% of the expenses, leaving a cushion of about 10% for unplanned expenses or for scholarships. The best ways to provide scholarships for families with financial need are the following: 1) Use the 10% surplus for scholarships on a needs-basis 2) Donations to a scholarship fund 3) scholarship in exchange for teaching as tutor 4) Automatic scholarships--possibly for the fourth (and above) child in a larger family.

Paying Tutors and Others

Some SGs will want to hire tutors/teachers to teach classes during a weekly community/campus day or days. Often SGs are able to hire one of the parents to teach, but often teachers from outside the parent community are hired to teach a class.

It is important to match the teacher's training, expertise and gifts with the class and students to be taught and to compensate fairly. We recommend \$25 per class period as a general baseline rate, but this may vary for reasons of geography, qualifications of the teacher, volume of classes taught, financial constraints and other factors.

In addition to paying tutors/teachers, there are others who could be paid for their work and services: The SG Director, other administrators, childcare providers, web developers and the like. Naturally, larger groups will have more administrative needs and therefore will more likely pay others for needed services. Some larger SGs may have function with a team of administrators such as Grammar School Director, Upper School Director, SG Director, Administrative Assistant, or other combinations of roles.

We recommend that teachers and others be paid on a monthly basis, at the end of the month. This keeps check-writing manageable and make bookkeeping easier as well. Automatic payments can also be arranged fairly easily using modern online banking tools.

Bookkeeping

The SG Director, or some other person appointed or hired by the Director, must "keep the books." In our opinion this is best done in one of two ways. 1) A small SG can make use of an online banking tool to regularly access up to date financial records. A GoogleDoc spreadsheet (recommended) or Excel spreadsheet could be used to track and record all income and expenses, and compare them to previously-set annual budget. 2) A second and enhanced way of keeping the books is to use Quickbooks instead of a spreadsheet. Quickbooks is easy to use and learn, and will enable the Director or Bookkeeper to generate reports (such as a Profit and Loss report showing all income and expense for a given period) that will be helpful for analysis and planning.

Hiring Tutors and Staff (Sample Work Agreement)

From the very beginning, we recommend that even small SGs adopt high standards for the way that tutors and other staff are recruited, interviewed and hired. This will help

prevent misunderstanding and resentment that usually emerges when hiring is done “from the hip.” Standard best practices for hiring include: 1) posting the open position with a brief, clear job description 2) a required written application 3) a required interview 4) a signed work agreement for those hired, specifying the job description, hours worked, reporting structure, compensation, payment periods, vacation, other expectations and logistical items. A sample work agreement is contained in the appendix of this Handbook.

Ordering Educational Materials

In order to save labor and money, SGs will often elect to order some of their curricula materials as a group. For example, SGs will receive a 20% discount and free shipping on curriculum for group orders (20 items or more) placed with Classical Academic Press. This means that it will very helpful to appoint one person in charge of collecting a “curriculum fee” from SG parents to fund the single order of curricula from a publisher like Classical Academic Press. One way to do this is up front as part of the application for a family coming into a SG. For example a family with one third grader would see in the application a chart specifying the curriculum fee for third grade in your SG. That fee would be collected at the beginning of the year and then would fund the group order for the SG.

Part Four: The Leadership of the Schole Group

I. Leadership

Assess and Recalibrate. Why not ask the question whenever the leaders gather for planning and assessment: How are we doing in implementing our SG privileged principles throughout our SG? What can we do to improve and enhance our implementation?

General/Executive Leadership

The SG Director is the executive leader of the SG. The rest of the SG parent community (and students too) will be looking for a clear articulation of the mission and vision of the SG, clear and forthright decision-making, a commitment to a fair and free exchange of ideas tempered with a willingness to choose a path and bring hopes and goals to fruition and fulfillment. We highly recommend the book *The Advantage* by Patrick Lencioni for all SG Directors and others helping lead a SG.

Organization Chart (Sample in Appendix)

One way to clarify how an organization works is to create an organization chart that visually represents various departments, leaders and roles. A small SG would result in a very simple chart, but a larger one might have several departments and person represented: SG Director, Grammar School Director, Upper School Director, Advancement and Marketing Coordinator, Webmaster, various tutors, etc.

Management Notebook or Spreadsheet

The SG Director may wish to keep a notebook or online document for keeping notes at meetings, planning, setting goals, recording ideas. An online GoogleDoc or Spreadsheet is a powerful tool for tracking ideas, planning and organizing. Such a document or spreadsheet is stored “on the cloud” and can be made accessible to anyone the Director wishes--which greatly expedites collaboration and communication.

Using an Online Management Tool: Basecamp or Schoology

We recommend that every SG Director consider using Basecamp as an online project management tool that will consolidate communications, file management and task management. It is very easy and intuitive to use, and quite affordable. You can learn more at Basecamp.com. We also highly recommend the online learning management system called Schoology (free version) for having your teachers manage communication, assignments and documents with students. You can learn more about Schoology at Schoology.com.

Using a Reflection Notebook

We recommend that the SG Director carry a bound journal/notebook for taking physical notes at meetings and for recording plans and ideas. The notebook can also be used for notes when observing teachers or meeting with parents or students.

Job Descriptions

Clear and detailed job descriptions should be created for every paid person serving the SG, but also for important volunteer positions. This will go a long way in preventing confusion, disagreement, frustration and resentment. These job descriptions should be re-visited annually by both the Director and the job-holder and then modified as needed. These job descriptions also become integral to the hiring process as well as the orientation given to a new person who is hired.

Recruiting and Hiring

The SG Director will be the chief person who recruits and hires people to serve in the SG. It is important to recruit and hire well, as any organization is only as good as the people who comprise it. It is wise to interview at least two people for any important position, rather than quickly hiring the first person available who appears competent for the work. An SG Director, should refrain therefore, from signalling to another parent in casual conversation that she “would be perfect for the position” prior to any application being received. It would be much wiser to say “I would love to get an application from you--you seem to be well-suited for this work.” Before hiring for an important position, an internal and possibly an external ad should be sent forth. It would be very disheartening for one well-qualified

parent to hear that another parent (with few qualifications) had been hired for a position that was never even announced as being open.

Terminating

The best way to avoid the unpleasant task of terminating someone is to work hard on the front end to hire well. If you hire great people, well-suited to the job at hand, you will not have to terminate.

Still, occasionally and rarely, someone that a SG Director has hired will need to be removed from a role or position. When this becomes clear, the Director should act clearly and decisively. There are essentially three ways to bring a person's service with your SG to an end: 1) Immediate termination for serious failing and/or misconduct. This must be done when it is clear that keeping the person on the job will do more harm than having the person remain. 2) Non-renewal at the end of the period specified in the work agreement--typically the end of the academic year. A non-renewal of a teacher is technically not a termination, but has the same effect. "Non-renewal" terminations are not possible for those hired with no specified work period. 3) Termination for persons working without a specified period in the agreement. Such a termination can be done as part of a review (annual reviews are recommended) or after a probationary period in which the person has not made the needed improvement.

In every case except for flagrant misconduct or egregious incompetence requiring immediate termination, a person serving should be notified via a review of shortcomings and problems that must be remedied in order to stay employed in your SG. A process for improvement and a timeline for such improvement should be put in writing. If adequate progress is not made after such a probationary, remedial period, then the person should be dismissed.

Clear Roles and Responsibilities (Sample Job Description in the Appendix)

The SG Director should create job descriptions that clearly specify the role and responsibilities for each person hired. These job descriptions should not disappear once created, but should be consulted whenever a review is scheduled--which should be annually at a minimum. We recommend an annual review of performance in which the job description is consulted and then collaboratively revised as warranted.

Reviews

We recommend an annual reviews for all hired employees working with a SG. The Director will likely conduct these reviews in one-on-one meeting with SG tutors, and other persons hired. Prior to the meeting, we recommend that the tutor complete a written self-assessment highlighting strengths and areas to leverage, and weaknesses and areas to improve. We also recommend that the Director consult notes of at least three whole-class observations as part of her own assessment of the tutor; the Director should also consult the tutor's job description and seek to assess the work of the tutor in

comparison to the specifics of the job description. Please see Part Six of this Handbook for more guidance on observing and assessing teachers.

Committees and Committee Charters

As a SG grows, it will be very helpful to create teams or committees for governing and operating a SG. Committees could be created to serve each major area of a SG (following the five core areas illustrated in our leadership wheel below, the same five areas around which this Handbook is organized). Thus committees could be created for: 1) the mission of the school: educational philosophy, curriculum and pedagogy 2) the people of the SG: community and culture 3) the management of the SG: operations, policy and finances 4) the leadership of the SG: leadership and strategy 5) the growth of the SG: marketing, enrollment and advancement.

Common teams or committees might be:

- **Operations Team:** works on general administration, admissions, hiring, rental agreements
- **Curriculum Team:** selects and orders curricula; set's up scope and sequence of studies
- **Teacher Development Team:** oversees and guides the ongoing training of teachers
- **Marketing & Advancement Team:** manages communications and messages through the SG website, Facebook and other social media; creates documents and brochures

Each team should have (or eventually have) a team leader and a team charter. A team charter will specify in one page or less the purpose and goals of the team and the concrete activities it pursues to achieve those goals. Team leaders should read *The Advantage* by Patrick Lencioni and seek to implement its principles of team leadership such as building trust, creating clarity (with collective goals), over-communicating clarity and reinforcing clarity.

Leadership Team Meetings

Leadership team meetings should be led according to the same principles contained in *The Advantage*, mentioned above. It is difficult to lead teams and team meetings well; we know of no greater wisdom than that found in this book by Patrick Lencioni. Lencioni suggests that leadership teams should be relatively small (seven or less) so that meaningful discussion and true team unity will characterize the endeavor. Leaders should review the purpose, goals and activities of the team in preparation for the meeting, and create a clear agenda for the meeting with the other members present--what Lencioni calls a "real time" agenda. The work of a team is usually not done in the meeting itself, but between meetings. The meetings become a means of reviewing past work and calibrating future work until the next meeting.

II. Strategy

A. Strategic Leadership

Our word “strategy” derives from the Greek word *strategos*, meaning “general.” In some respects, a SG Director must resemble a general preparing for and then successfully conducting a battle. Generals must ensure that preparations are made for training soldiers and supplying them; the capabilities of the enemy must be studied and assessed; the opportune time and place for battle must be determined. Similarly, the SG Directors must prepare, train, anticipate, assess, study and decide. This kind of strategic leadership involves looking over the wide range of the “field,” taking in and assessing a variety of data, and then making an informed, wise decision. Strategic leadership, therefore, assesses a wide array of information and takes the long view rather than focusing on only short-term objectives.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is long-term planning. It seeks to plan for and achieve an imagined future that is three, five or ten years away. For a SG, the Director (as a strategic leader) will be thinking not only about what will make the present year fruitful, but will also be thinking about what needs to be done now in order for the SG to be fruitful 3-5 years down the road.

Strategic plans usually engage careful analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that face an organization. This analysis is often called a SWOT analysis. After deep engagement with these realities, several long-term goals can be brainstormed for possible inclusion in a strategic plan. The the number of goals should be limited and certainly less than 10--more likely less than 5.

Essential Tools and Process

The tools for creating a strategic plan are simple: 1) a whiteboard 2) a spreadsheet 3) the presence of the leadership team. We recommend a large whiteboard and plenty of multi-colored post-it notes. One person should facilitate and guide the sessions and post these notes using a brainstorming system that is prompted by the mission and vision of the SG, along these lines:

- What is the mission of our SG?
- What do we hope our SG will “look like” in five years?
- How many students in what grades?
- What quality of students?
- How will teaching and mentoring be delivered to these students?
- How will the SG be perceived by those in the community as restful?
- How will the SG be perceived by those outside of the community as restful?
- How will parents mature in “restful learning” in the course of five years?

- What are the current strengths of our SG in terms of people, talent, facilities, assets?
- What are the current weaknesses of our SG terms of people, talent, facilities, assets?
- What are the opportunities before us that we should consider taking?
- What are the threats that our SG faces that could prevent us from realizing our mission or imagined future?

Using an Online Survey

One way to save time and collect response to these strategic questions is to put them on an online survey using a tool like Survey Monkey. You can sign up for a free account at surveymonkey.com, then collect all of the responses to your survey ahead of time, distribute them to your leadership team, then come prepared to discuss them at a planning meeting.

Creating a Strategic Plan

For those who have never created a strategic plan, we recommend the straightforward process presented by Erica Olsen in her book *The Strategic Planning Kit for Dummies* and the overview video and article here: [Strategic Planning Process by Eric Olsen](#).

A strategic plan will usually contain a clear statement of the goals you seek to reach (your destination). Each goal can be called a “strategic goal” of which there should be only a few (five or less in our opinion and three seems wise). If you create too many strategic goals, you will likely lose focus and risk failure and discouragement.

Each objective will be reached by means of a list of objectives that once completed, will result in the reaching of a goal. These objectives can be called strategic objectives. Each objective should be assigned a person who is responsible to complete it and due date. Finally, each objective might need to be further broken down into “targets” of tasks.

A significant goal, like “Training half of our tutors to become mentor teachers” might involve a long list of objectives over several years of work to achieve. You can imagine, therefore, the need for someone (or several people) to monitor progress on a regular basis to ensure that tasks are being completed that achieve an objective that contributes to the ultimate achievement of a goal.

Monitoring Progress Online

We recommend that SG leaders create an online spreadsheet for recording your strategic goals, objectives and tasks and for monitoring progress and holding everyone accountable for steady work to bring about strategic success. We very much like using a spreadsheet on GoogleDocs for this purpose.

Monitoring and Revising a Strategic Plan

As the months roll by, circumstances will likely change that might require you to adjust and modify portions of your strategic plan. This is normal, but it underscores the importance of

regularly monitoring the progress being made “working the plan.” We think it wise to conduct a quarterly or semi-annual review of the plan for the purposes of making adjustments.

Books

While we recommend the *The Strategic Planning Kit for Dummies* by Erica Olsen as a general resources, we also recommend the *The Strategic Process: 10 Steps for Planning Your Independent School’s Future*, published by the National Association for Independent Schools. While the planning process suggested in this book assumes an independent school, the principles are geared toward education and fairly easily translated into homeschooling community.

PART FIVE: Stewardship Perspective

I. Marketing and Enrollment

--Introduction

Many SGs wish to be small communities with three to six families involved, and thus there is no great need to develop to publicize and promote the SG to recruit additional families. However, most SGs, even small ones, still have (or will have) a need to find good-fitting families for their SG. What follows are some ideas and practices that can help you find those families and children.

--Show That You Are Serious and Committed to Excellence

No matter the size of your SG, you naturally want to lead your group with excellence. To attract others to your SG, you should be... attractive. The substance of what you do--your relationships, the teaching that is provided during your community day, the ways in which your community enjoys and delights in restful learning--these are the really important things. Still, these substantial elements might not be what is first seen by prospective families. What they might first see is a website, or a brochure, or an email, or a Facebook post. All of these elements--though more symbolic than substantial--should still be done with excellence.

What follow below are some tools and methods that should be done well in order to promote your SG with excellence.

--SG Website

Though some small SGs will forgo a website, we encourage all SGs, regardless of size, to make use of the free website template that the SG Network provided to all SGs. The website will be useful to SGs that have no desire to promote and attract new families, because the website is also used to serve the needs of existing families since it can host assignments, a document library, calendar of events, etc.

Any SG that does want to attract new families should make use of a website. Some without website experience might feel this as a burden, but it should not take long for those without such experience to learn their way around hosting and using a website on the Wordpress platform (which the SG Network uses.). To see a working demo of the website template that we provide free to any SG, visit the demo site here: [SG Demo Website](#). The SG Network will also provide you with an experienced web developer (at a very reasonable cost) to help you setup your website should you need such help.

--SG Facebook Page

The great majority of American mothers have a Facebook account. It make good sense for your SG to host its own Facebook Group (easily set up in a few moments on Facebook). Your Facebook Group page will be a great way to share information and events surrounding your SG with many other parents and families who may hear about your SG for the first time via Facebook. Your SG website should also have links to your Facebook page.

--Application (Sample in Appendix)

Many SGs post their family application right on their website. Some allow for parents to fill out the application right on the site; others allow parents to download the application. This application should be done well to professional standards. We have included a sample application in the appendix to this Handbook.

--Brochure

One perennial tool for promoting your SG and attracting new families is the tri-fold brochure. If you use one of these, develop it to professional standards, engaging someone with graphic design training. The brochure should be pithy and airy (not dense with text) and clearly portray your mission and character, and motivating readers to take the next step to contact you (or visit your website) to learn more.

--Open House Events and Information Nights

One terrific way to promote your SG is to host Open House events in which you invite interested parents to visit your SG on a community day and see your community in action. If you do this, we encourage you to plan for these days carefully, and observing the following: 1) provide name tags for all visitors 2)

designate a few people (perhaps upper school students) to host visitors and guide them during their visit 3) Create a basic itinerary for the day and the activities / classes that visitors will observe 4) Have coffee and refreshments available 5) Plan for a time when visitors can visit with the Director and perhaps other parents and tutors.

Some SGs will also want to host an Information Night, in which parents come to an event that might feature: 1) Welcome and presentation from the Director 2) Parent testimonial 3) Various presentations of student learning 4) Music performed by students 5) Questions and answers 6) Refreshments

--Internal Marketing

While it is important to promote your SG to families outside of your SG, it is also very important to promote your SG to current families. The reality is that many families who join your SG will just be beginning their journey learning about classical education and restful learning. They will also be busy, stretched and often stressed. It is critically important, therefore to minister to these families and help them to learn more about how to bring scholé into their homeschools and families. This means that much of your messaging, writing, and communication should have current families in mind.

--The Director's Memo

One important way to build community and cast vision is for the Director to write a brief article or "memo" that is sent to the entire SG community. The memo can contain logistical, housekeeping items, but it should also contain a brief article about some aspect of the SG vision of restful learning and classical education. It can also be very helpful to occasionally feature a profile of parent, family or student--sharing something interesting and edifying about a member of your community.

--Small Things That Mean a Lot

Community grows and spirits rise when the SG leadership is thoughtful and creative, leads the group in both big and small ways. Some small things that Directors should consider include: 1) Design a logo for your SG and have it embroidered on high quality polo shirts 2) Design a commonplace book (perhaps with your logo and the student's name burned into the leather) and hand them out to each student 4th grade and above 3) Once a month have each tutor's or parent's favorite Starbucks coffee waiting for them when they arrive for community day 4) Host a dinner party for all the mom in your SG once a quarter in which everyone comes prepared to discuss a poem that has been read and studied ahead of time 5) Plan "scholé" educational activities for the parents and tutors once or twice a year that might feature going to Shakespeare play, a museum or a symphony.

--The Secret to Growing a SG--Blessed Children and Happy Moms

The best way to grow your SG (should you want to) is help all the families in your group pursue and achieve restful learning in the classical tradition. If you do this, you will have blessed children and therefore happy moms. When moms are happy with the education of their children--they become the best promoters of your SG you could ever want. Your SG will grow, when moms are delighted. If moms are not blessed and happy, virtually nothing that you do (snazzy websites and brochures) will make much of a difference.

II. Advancement and Fundraising

Advancement and fundraising are normally activities that larger SGs will consider as they grow--particularly those that are operating as non-profit organizations that can receive tax-deductible donations. However, even small SG's may want to do some limited fundraising for the purposes of providing scholarships.

Some SG Directors will catch a vision for growing not only one SG, but also starting other SGs in a region. If you are one of these enterprising Directors, you will want to think strategically about how to advance and grow your first, local SG and about how to replicate your success helping a second SG to start and flourish.

--Raising Money with Angel Donors

The most likely prospective donor to your SG will be someone that you already know who is passionate about your vision and has the financial resources to support your SG. These kind of mission-aligned, passionate donors are often called "angel" donors--and they are often willing to give at the beginning of an enterprise and not just help in pinch or crisis.

You should not raise money "to make budget;" donors do not generally want to help you "keep the lights on." Donors will be much more happy to give money to: 1) provide scholarships to families that otherwise could not afford the tuition and curriculum costs to participate in your SG 2) provide equipment and furnishings that will enhance your SG such as art, technological equipment and furniture 3) help you acquire the space you need to operate your SG.

--Donated Services

Others that share your passion and mission may not be able to give you monetary gifts, but will donate services. For example, a like-minded church may give you a discount for leasing church space for your community day, or even provide the space for no cost. Some people will be willing to tutor or teach for your SG at no cost or at a discount.

--Letting the Need be Known and Asking

You will not receive donated funds or services if you do not let others know that you have a need or desire for such gifts. You can let others know in various ways such as: 1) publishing a wish list of desired/need items on your website and elsewhere 2) starting and publicizing a scholarship fund for families with financial needs.

It is also important to be willing to reach out to potential donors and simply ask them if they can help in any way. Donors will not mind being asked, and if you do not ask you will likely not be given. Your "asking" should generally be in the context of a relationship that you have developed, so that the donor already knows about the ministry and work of your SG and is "warm" to it.

--Starting Another SG

To start or sponsor another SG, a Director should have 1) an entrepreneurial spirit 2) passion for the SG ministry and 3) proven success leading an SG. If you think that you might want to sponsor another SG, you will also want to recruit a team of leaders that will ensure that both your first and second group will be well-led and cultivated. You may want to put in place (possibly hire) an Assistant Director in one or both groups if their size makes this sensible.

Sometimes a new group will start as the result of one SG growing large enough that the Director and leadership think that splitting into two groups will be wise. Sometimes groups of parents from one region (travelling a good ways to a SG outside their region) will want to start a new group that is more conveniently located. Both of these reasons can be healthy reasons for starting new groups.

--Serving as a Consultant to Other SG Directors and Communities

Some Directors may want to serve as Consultants to new SGs around the country--helping train new Directors and meeting with leadership teams of new groups that are starting. If you are interested in doing this, we encourage you to offer your services on the Marketplace section of the ScholeGroups.com website. The SG Network will automatically approve any Director as a Consultant after a Director has been leading a SG for at least one year. A SG Consultant can set her own rates and will engage and contract with new groups independently.

--Growing Your Scholé Group

As mentioned in the Marketing and Enrollment section of this Handbook, the best way to grow your group is to do excellent work that results in

blessed children and happy moms. The happy moms will naturally spread the word about your group to other moms who will come investigate it with interest. The best way, therefore, to grow your group is focus on doing good work and then encourage your happy partner-moms to invite their friends to consider your SG.

--Growing with Like-Minded Families: Admit Wisely

It is also very important to have an application and admissions process that ensures that you admit families that actually will fit well with your SG. Sometimes a family will apply to your SG not because they share your philosophy of restful, classical, Christian education, but because your SG is convenient and at the right price, etc. We encourage you not to admit families that do not share your philosophy--it will only create grief and stress at various points. If a family is new to the scholé philosophy--but very interested, excited and teachable regarding it--they can be a good fit. Do not, however, admit families that do not display a good initial understanding and appreciation for the scholé philosophy, and do not display a teachable spirit.

This means that you should have a formal application and admissions process, making it possible for you decline admission to a family without great offense. The fact that you "do not take anybody" will actually work in your favor in the long run as the word gets out. In your application documents, you can signal this reality by saying things like "we are looking for families that are looking for us." It is also wise to have two people conduct an interview with prospective families, in the spirit of "two heads are better than one."

Your group will grow better and likely faster by focusing on qualified, well-fitting families. We know of several groups that have learned this the hard way, admitting families that worked against their mission and vision, creating a great deal of stress for the entire SG.

This is not to say that Directors should not be generous and patient, admitting families that don't know much about classical education and restful learning. Everyone is not a journey recovering these things. The point we want to emphasize: Don't admit families that you sense are not really wanting to take this journey with you.

One final note about this: In borderline cases, you can admit a family provisionally--meaning you could welcome them into the SG for the first semester, letting them know that you would revisit their fit after about three months. This would give you time to observe their journey with you and them time to also assess their fitness with the group.

--Surviving and Thriving Through Your First Year

Someone has said that a writer must write his first novel to learn how to write a novel. We think that something similar holds true for starting and running a SG: You must direct a SG for year to learn how to direct a SG. This means that you will learn a great deal "on the job" that one simply cannot learn by reading books (or this Handbook!). You should, therefore, be patient with yourself and expect to make some missteps along the way.

There are few things that a new Director should keep in mind during the first year:

- Don't travel alone but recruit and build a team of leaders and helpers
- Delegate tasks and responsibilities to others--don't automatically assume that you should do everything yourself.
- Access and study the training videos online at ScholeGroups.com
- Talk to other Directors--especially those with two or more year's experience
- Join the live Director's webinars online (generally monthly) hosted by the SG Network
- Seek feedback from your community--listen to their concerns and suggestions and make the changes that make sense as quickly as you can
- Keep a "reflection notebook" that you carry everywhere to record notes, thoughts, ideas, feedback on how to better direct your SG.
- Set aside 30-60 minutes a day for your own scholé. As hard as this may be, it is the heart of the philosophy we espouse and we must live it not just talk about it.
- Set up a monthly or bi-monthly "scholé sisters" meeting where you and the other SG moms can be together for about two hours discussing something you are reading together.

PART SIX: Pedagogical Perspective

I. Academic Leadership

As a SG, you are partnering with parents who are serving as the primary educators of their children. However, the purpose of the SG is to provide for the education of these children in the tradition of classical education and restful learning. As the Director of the SG, it your responsibility to ensure that everyone is growing in their appreciation of classical education and restful learning, and learning how to implement in their own homes.

One important way you do this is by supervising the teaching that is provided during your community day or days, when all the children come together for instruction by parents and tutors. What follows describes the ways in which you can oversee this instruction with excellence.

--Modeling and Encouragement

It is important to stress that the heart of good teaching in the classical tradition is vibrant relationship between teacher and student. The teacher is a model for the student in a dozen ways; the teacher in fact is a mode of what a student is. Thus a teacher must display her own wonder, love for the things that are lovely, her own curiosity and inquisitiveness, her own evidence of being changed by what she studies and teaches her students, her own cultivated affections for things that are true, good and beautiful.

When the teacher is this kind of model, she indeed is a kind of fire that catches flame in the hearts and minds of her students. Without this "burning fire" in the soul of a teacher, not much else that is good can occur in a teaching session.

This of course means that you as a Director, want to hire or place as many teachers as you can who embody this soulish "fire." The best way to learn if you have such a teacher is simply to ask (perhaps on a written application) for a list of the books that teacher has read in the last year. Someone with the "fire" will be reading--no matter what else life is demanding. If the list has less than ten books, there is likely no fire present. The quality of the books listed should also be noted. If you are hiring a science teacher has done no reading in science in the past year, that person has lost the fire of science.

--Classical Pedagogy

The vast majority of us have not had a classical education, and so won't be very familiar with classical methods of teaching. Therefore, we must be patient

with our parents and teachers and assume that we all will need to grow in our ability to teach classically. We encourage all SG teachers to access the pedagogical training available on ClassicalU.com where there are such courses as:

- The Essentials of Effective Teaching (Robyn Burlew)
- Principles of Classical Pedagogy (Christopher Perrin)
- Teaching the Great Books (Josh Gibbs)

Courses like these will help new classical teachers to more quickly learn the basics about how to teach using classical pedagogies. We have developed Training Pathways for Scholé Group Directors to help direct yourself, teachers, and parents in going deeper into the classical tradition bit by bit.

The essential principles of classical pedagogy are listed below for your reference, but they are also contained in the Lesson Checklist and Review Form that you will find in the appendix to this Handbook. We recommend that teachers use this checklist weekly when preparing their lessons; the checklist can also be used as a review form by Directors during a teacher observation.

Essential Principles of Classical Pedagogy

1. Festina Lente

- The teacher works to ensure mastery of each step of learning, and does not advance students to further study until mastery has been reached.

2. Multum Non Multa

- The teacher prefers to teach a few things deeply and well rather than cursorily covering many things that will not be mastered.

3. Repetitio Mater Memoriae

- The teacher understands that regular repetition and review is necessary to acquire mastery.

4. Embodied Learning

- The teacher understands that classical education aims first for the formation of a human soul and thus seeks to cultivate each student by bodily pathways and not only by rational means.

5. Songs, Chants, and Jingles

- The lower school teacher regularly (daily) employs songs, chants, and jingles to help students master important information.

6. Wonder and Curiosity
 - The teacher understands that all learning should be stimulated and motivated by a student's natural wonder and curiosity about God, the world, and ourselves.
7. Educational Virtues
 - The teacher's lesson plans reflect her effort to develop student virtues such as love, humility, courage, temperance, constancy, diligence, and patience.
8. Scholē, Contemplation, and Leisure
 - The teacher understands that contemplation and reflection are necessary for students to deeply understand and love various manifestations of truth, goodness, and beauty.

In addition to taking courses on ClassicalU.com, we can recommend a few books on classical pedagogy:

- *The Seven Laws of Teaching*, by John Milton Gregory
- *Teaching from Rest*, by Sarah Mackenzie
- *Learning from Rest*, by Christopher Perrin

Training and Oversight

All SG teachers are growing in their craft and seeking ways to improve. They also seek to help other teachers and colleagues to improve. Therefore, we recommend that SG teachers be occasionally observed by either the SG director or other teaching colleagues. Those teachers pursuing training on ClassicalU.com will be moving through valuable training online, seeking to advance from Level 1 (apprentice) to Level 2 (journeyman) to Level 3 (mentor/master). In addition to training online, we also recommend that teachers observe other teachers and be observed as well. These observations become part of teacher mentoring and involve constructive, formative criticism guided by an observation form (included in the appendix). Parent and student surveys may also be employed in order to assess the feedback given from those we serve.

Directors should take advantage of the training on ClassicalU and consider making training on ClassicalU a part of their teachers' work agreements. All Scholé Group directors, tutors, and parents receive a discount on individual annual subscriptions to ClassicalU.

--ClassicalU Training for Tutors

Not only are there pedagogical courses on ClassicalU, but there are over 20 courses on all aspects of classical education on ClassicalU.com. We think it a

very wise investment to have all tutors and most parents subscribe to take courses on ClassicalU across three levels of training. ClassicalU features some of the most experienced teachers in the renewal of classical education. The courses can be viewed at any time, and also display easily and well on mobile devices. Anyone can view and sample the first 20% of a course for free without subscribing.

--Formative Observations and Mentoring

Teachers improve best when they are regularly thinking about their craft and regularly talking with other teacher about their craft. The best way to do this is provide time in which teachers observe one another and then talk about what went well and what could be improved. The Director or academic leader in a SG should also regularly observe teachers and then talk about what went well and could be improved, offering formative, edifying feedback. Formative observations and conversations seek to help form and cultivate teachers, rather than simply finding fault and and correcting teaching errors. The best way to create a "formative" context for observation and discussion about teaching is to do it regularly enough that it no longer is perceived as a "high stakes," "do or die," event.

A teacher should be observed at least 2-3 times a semester, even if the observer cannot stay for an entire lesson. This means the Director will need to plan ahead and schedule space for observations--both teacher-to-teacher observations and Director-to-teacher observations. Time must also be set aside for conversation after an observation.

We like the 20-20-20 method that many school leaders employ. 1) Observe a teacher for the first 20 minutes of a class with an open mind, simply adopting the disposition of student, taking in the lesson 2) For the second 20 minutes in the class, adopt the disposition of a teacher assessor, using the Lesson Review Form in the appendix of this Handbook. What is going well? What could be improved? 3) Schedule the next 20 minutes to talk with teacher about what you saw either immediately after the class or some time that day--or at the very least by the next day.

--The Director Walk-Around

It is also wise for the Director to schedule a monthly "walk-around" in which she spend the entire community day visiting as many classes as she can and taking general notes that she will share with the teaching staff that day or the next. This can be very helpful for getting the big picture what is truly happening across the SG during community day.

--The Director Group/Class Immersion Day

It can also be very helpful for the Director (especially for larger SGs) to adopt a group of students for a day and attend all the classes with that group. For example, the Director could join all of the middle school students in each of their classes for the day, essentially “being a student” with them throughout the day. This will give the Director a very good idea of what the teaching is like from the student’s perspective. The Director should take notes that she shares with the teaching staff the very same day or the next.

--Academic Teams and Team Meetings

Teachers develop best when they collaborate and converse. It is therefore very important to create teams of teachers who regularly observe one another and talk about their craft. These teams should also be studying together, either reading a book that the team discusses, or taking a course together on ClassicalU.com. A small SG may have just one academic team, which is fine. Larger SGs may create teams for K-2 teachers, 3-6 teachers, upper school teachers and the like. These teams should set three curricular and/or pedagogical goals for the year that are regularly discussed, studied and applied. These goals should be ranked by priority so that the number 1 goals will surely be achieved to a good degree. The teams should meet about every two weeks and the agenda should be already known: the team will discuss the observations of other teachers, noting what went well and what could be improved; the team will discuss the progress on the three goals it has set, with particular attention paid to goal number 1.

Academic Team meetings should not devolve to much talk about logistics, supplies, discipline, etc. The team leader should allow for about ten minutes for these kinds of housekeeping items--at the end of the meeting rather than before. Many logistical concerns can be handled via email or memos rather than during valuable face-to-face teacher conversation.

If you find it difficult to make time for live meetings during your community days, consider scheduling live meetings at another time, even online using a video conferencing solution like Zoom or Skype (both are easy to use). Meeting live online is better than no live meeting at all.

--All Faculty Meetings

About once per month, Directors may want to gather all the faculty together for a “Faculty Meeting.” These meetings should be well-planned with a written agenda, otherwise they usually devolve into a discussion unorganized topics and concerns. Again, housekeeping items should be kept to a minimum and dealt with at the end of the meeting if they need to come up at all. When the faculty is together, they should be encouraged, refreshed, inspired and edified. Noting the following elements will help:

- Serve refreshments: this signals that your time together should be enjoyed and be refreshing
- Sing: A song or hymn of praise. Possibly have a teacher who is musician lead.
- Shine the light of your vision: Share something about the heartbeat of your SG--what makes it a delight and so worth doing
- Contemplate something beautiful, true and good: Perhaps take the first ten minutes to read and discuss a poem or view and discuss a famous painting, or listen to and discuss a piece of beautiful music.
- Give thanks: Note the various ways God is blessing your community--give thanks to God for his work among you and for particular people who have blessed the community
- Ask for God's help: Set aside 4-5 minutes to thank God and ask him for his assistance, help and blessing
- Discuss one pedagogical goal: If your entire faculty has chosen a pedagogy to cultivate during a semester or year, summarize that pedagogy and goal and ask the faculty to share examples of success and ongoing challenges.
- Arrange for a teacher "testimony" in which one of your teachers (notified ahead of time) shares an example of a successful lesson. The teacher should share her goals and preparation for the lesson, then the way the lesson went and any "after effects."
- Dismiss with a benediction: Have everyone rise, then read a benediction and possibly sing the Doxology.

--Monthly Webinars

The SG Network sponsors monthly webinars for teachers and parents. If you can't join a live webinar, consider viewing the recordings of these webinars archived on the ScholeGroups.com website.

--Partnering with Paid and Volunteer Tutors

There is a difference between working with volunteers and working with paid teachers. When we pay someone for a service, there is naturally an understood accountability. Sometimes volunteer teachers or tutors will serve with delight, excellence and reliability, because they share your mission and passion, and because they are committed and virtuous. Of course, things can go wrong whether working with paid teachers or volunteers. The best way to ensure a strong partnership with paid teachers or volunteers is to create a work agreement of both kinds of people. This is simply a way of clarifying expectations, defining the duties of the paid or volunteer teacher, and minimizing the opportunity for misunderstanding, offense and conflict.

The volunteer work agreement need not be lengthy and filled with legal language; but it should clearly specify responsibilities, duties and expectations.

Often SGs will accept a parent's teaching contribution in exchange for tuition. Another way to address this need is to pay all parents for their teaching but also require all parents to pay tuition.

In any arrangement with a teacher, paid or volunteer, it is very important to 1) clarify expectations and specify duties and responsibilities and 2) regularly encourage and edify teachers.

Here is a list of ways you might consider encouraging your teachers:

- Write them notes of appreciation
- Regularly observe their teaching and talk with them about the craft of teaching
- Place each teacher on an academic team
- Provide ongoing teacher training for them by subscribing them to ClassicalU.com
- Regularly (at least monthly) ask teachers: "How are you doing and what can I do to support you?" Then listen and do anything for them you reasonably can.
- Learn what their favorite Starbucks drink (or other brand) and then surprise them occasionally by dropping it off at their class (still hot!)
- Arrange for faculty dinner parties every two months hosted in your home

--Student Assessment and Grading

One important way to adopt restful, classical teaching is to grade without dependence on the 100 point scale, which tends to focus students not on learning but "getting the grade." We therefore encourage all SGs to downplay numerical, data-driven grading. This doesn't mean that you don't assess and evaluate; you just do not have to use the typical modern tools to do so, such as multiple choice tests, fill in the blank, and the 1-100 point scale. We recommend that you consider four main "grades:"

- *magna cum laude* (with great praise)
- *cum laude* (with praise)
- *satis* (sufficient, satisfactory)
- *non satis* (not sufficient)

We think it best to give grades based on a standard of mastery (mastery grading) rather than based on a comparison of student to student (comparison grading). Ideally, every average student working diligently

should do praiseworthy work (*cum laude*). Those who excel beyond this expectation will be the *magna cum laude* students. Students who do not do praiseworthy work, but still do adequate work, may be designated *satis*. *Non satis* means lacking sufficiency or adequacy.

Students should also be able to bring their assessment up by demonstrating increasingly more mastery. Students should not be penalized for starting weak and ending strong. Rather than averaging early poor grades and later good grades, students should be given a cumulative assessment based on the level of mastery with which they end the course. This also means that certain kinds of assessments should be “rolling,” meaning that students can improve on a test or writing assignment. For example, you may allow an assigned paper to be handed in more than once, helping the student to improve his writing with a second version and perhaps moving his grade from *satis* to *cum laude*. It would be wise, therefore, to communicate to students at the beginning of your course (in the course description) what knowledge, skills, and virtues you intend to help them attain and master. This becomes your “learning target” or a kind of mastery “portrait” of what the student will look like after faithfully attending to your course. This portrait (list of knowledge, skill, and virtues) becomes the ultimate goal of the course—and if a student reaches it by the end of the course, that would be a praiseworthy, or a *cum laude*, achievement.

You may want to experiment with a “learning tree” (especially with younger students) that describes your mastery target. The tree, full of leaves and fruit, describes the mastery of your course. You could create a mature “mastery tree” in which various branches and fruit describe the knowledge, skills, and virtues you seek to impart. Students can gradually complete their own tree (adding on or coloring fruit) as they go. If they complete/fill out the entire tree (with your approval) by the end of the course, that is a praiseworthy *cum laude* achievement. Students then have an attractive, artistic, colored tree as a token of their work. This also has the advantage of comparing students to trees that are gradually growing strong and bearing fruit (Psalm 1, Luke 6). If this idea proves to have merit, the SG Network may create some professionally designed “learning trees” that you and your students can use.

Ultimately we want students to focus on learning and not their “grades.” Letting students know at the beginning of the course what praiseworthy work will entail (the specifics of mastery) will focus students on mastering skill rather than getting grades. We would like to emulate the principle located in the parable of the talents—in which the servant who is faithful with little is commended. Therefore a student with modest natural gifts deserves encouragement and commendation even if he does

not achieve the level of mastery of some of his peers. The student with great natural gifts should be exhorted and corrected if she is not faithful with her gifts—even if outperforming some of her peers. We can reduce the principle to this: we seek to assess students based on the faithful exercise of their God-given abilities.

--Student Discipline and Virtue Education

When a group of young students and friends gets together once or twice a week (for your community days), you will have some discipline challenges! A lot of the misbehavior will be caused by the sheer excitement that students have seeing one another and being together.

The best way to create a peaceful, warm, community day environment is to set clear and few guidelines for behavior. Consistent articulation and reminding of behavior standards and consistent enforcement (by all of the teachers and parents) is very helpful. Children should be taught principles of behavior and not only specific dos and don'ts.

One of the central, classical pedagogical principles is that education is largely a matter of the cultivation of virtue or virtues. The traditional "educational" or "intellectual" virtues are these:

- Love (always a virtue appropriate to the Christian)
- Humility (always a virtue appropriate to the Christian)
- Temperance
- Courage
- Constancy

If your SG is seeking to cultivate these virtues (and it should) then these virtues become the master principles that inform all student behavior, or all of your community day "rules."

Here are some common principles and behaviors that should be articulated well:

- No running and yelling inside (Principle: love your neighbor)
- Please do run and yell outside during recess (Principle: delight in friends, your body and creation)
- No talking over the teacher and other students, interrupting them (Principle: love your neighbor)
- Please do talk during class discussions, expressing your ideas and thoughts (Principle: Seek truth in conversation with your friends and teacher)

Teachers in each class of your community day might want to create their own class guidelines or “rules” that integrate with the master virtues that you are seeking to cultivate across your SG.

--Correction and Restoration

No doubt, there will be times when students misbehave, whether on account of willful sin, impulse, forgetfulness and combinations of these. When this happens, you will want to have a process in place by which students are corrected (from rectus--“right”) and set back on the right path.

90% (or more) of all misbehaviors should be handled by the teacher at hand. For particularly egregious misbehavior, a student may be sent to the Director or the parent (if she is present and available). Naturally, the consequences for a misbehavior should match the misbehavior. Since parents are usually present, the great majority of even serious misbehaviors can be handled immediately, and the child restored to the class.

Please see an example of a SG discipline policy in the appendix.

--Classroom Management

If you are teaching a group of students in a class setting, you will soon realize you need to acquire and employ some “classroom management” skills. Some of these skills you may have already acquired because of past teaching experience or similar setting in which you learned to lead groups of children (serving as camp counselor comes to mind!). You may have also been an attentive student and actually learned some of this management skill simply by observing your teachers.

Classroom management is simply a set of skills needed to lead a group of student effectively in a setting that we call a “class.” To lead and direct in this setting requires that you learn the processes and procedures that help everyone in class to be focussed on learning, discussing and contemplating. In other words, it is learning how to eliminate anything that distracts from your aims in the classroom. One way, therefore, to isolate the needed skills for managing a classroom is to note all those activities that are NOT learning, discussing and contemplating with a goal of either eliminating those activities or ensuring those activities take as less time as possible, are easy to do, and do not detract from learning. Here is a partial list of those activities:

- Teacher handing out papers
- Students handing in papers and assignments
- Students going to the bathroom
- Students getting up to sharpen pencil, get tissue, etc.
- Students getting out books and notebooks

- Students throwing away paper and other trash
- Communicating assignments to students
- Communicating scheduling and logistical information to students
- Students interrupting other students
- Students coming late for class
- Students coming to class without having completed homework or assignment
- Students horsing around during class
- Students not getting ready for class
- Students expressing confusion about assignment details and expectations
- Students coming to class without proper supplies, books, and other materials
- Students violating dress code
- Students “clowning” and drawing attention away from class
- Students bored because the work and instruction is too easy
- Students frustrated because the work and instruction is “over their head” or too difficult

Activities and activities like these should either be eliminated, reduced, or made as clear and easy as possible.

Many of these distracting activities can be eliminated by clear planning and communication. A teacher can set very clear guidelines for when students can go to the bathroom, for example. If a teacher allows for younger students to go the bathroom at any time for any student’s request...problems may ensue. Better to create a clear routine in which students will be encouraged to go the bathroom before or after class, and allow their bodies to adjust.

Some activities cannot be eliminated--like handing out papers and receiving student assignments. The teacher can, however, create clear routines for these activities that reduce the time almost to zero. For example, a “mail slot” (made out of cardboard) for each student can be set up with labels for each student’s name. Rather than students marching up the teacher and handing in papers, they can simply put them in their box slot. Teachers can give papers and tests back to students the same way. Teachers can hand out test and assignments by giving a stack of the papers to one student who then “passes them” back (if you have rows).

We recommend one very good resource containing many of these kinds of practical tips for managing a group of students: *Teach Like a Champion* by Doug Lemov. The section in the book entitled “Creating a Strong Classroom Culture” is particularly helpful for classroom management. It contains eight practices including:

- **Entry Routine:** How to help students enter your class ready to attend and learn
- **Do Now:** A short activity written on the board or on their desk. Basic idea: students should never have to ask themselves, "What I am supposed to be doing."
- **Tight Transitions:** "Quick and routine transitions that students can execute without extensive narration by the teacher."
- **Binder Control:** A required binder with a clear location for where students take and keep notes and other materials.
- **SLANT:** An acronym for five behaviors that help students to prepare to learn: Sit up. Listen. Ask and Answer Questions. Nod your head. Track the speaker.
- **On Your Mark:** Clearly show every student how to be ready for class--before class begins. Paper out; desk clear; pencil sharp and ready; homework out (in the upper right-hand section of the desk).
- **Seat Signals:** Students use hand signals (non-verbally) to communicate their requests. Examples:

"Can I please use the bathroom?" (Hand up with two fingers crossed)

"I need a new pencil." (Hold up pencil, wait for an exchange)

"I need a tissue." (Left hand pinching nose)

"I need to get out of my seat--to get something that dropped on the floor." (One finger held up rotated in a singular motion)

The teacher can respond yes or no with a nod or shake of the head, or put up a hand to communicate "in five minutes."

- **Props or "shout-outs:"** public praise for students who demonstrate excellence or virtue, with everyone joining in. Examples: "Two claps for David." "An answer like that deserves two, snaps, two stomps."

In addition to reviewing the section on "Creating a Strong Classroom Culture" from *Teach Like a Champion*, we also encourage you to view the ClassicalU course "The Essentials of Effective Teaching" by Robyn Burlew. Robyn is veteran teacher and trainer of teachers and her course offers a great deal of practical wisdom for managing classes.

--Student books, materials and technology

Of course we recommend that students have books! Students, however, must be taught to respect their books, care for and maintain them. Students should generally be encouraged to use book covers (we like the nylon "sock" variety) and store their books neatly and carefully in their desks and backpacks.

We should also teach students how to examine, survey, "break-in" and put their names and contact information in a book. We should also teach them the

various ways of skimming a book, and the ways of taking notes both on and in the book. We recommend that a student own every book read and studied in course, thus slowly building a library of his or her own books. A student should have her own shelf at home for storing her own "library."

We should teach students to underline and highlight important sections of a book, recording some notes and symbols in the margins of a book. Important notes should be recorded in the first few pages at the beginning of a book with associated page numbers. This way, a student can later read the first few pages of his notes in the front of book and quickly recall the essential wisdom he culled from reading the book. We do not recommend that students read any important book (therefore any assigned book) on a digital device. As convenient as these are, they are not as conducive to study and mastery of a text and a paper book.

For those wanting to learn more about how to read a book and associated note-taking methods, we recommend *How to Read a Book* by Adler and Van Doren.

--Student Room and Study Area

Every student should have a neat and tidy area for doing study and reading. Parents should be encouraged to create and patrol this space so that it serves rather than detracts from study. As we we have said above, we think that in each student's room there should be a bookshelf for collecting and storing books--books that the student owns.

We also encourage the practice of hanging a small to medium-sized whiteboard in every student's room. These whiteboards will be used for all manner of study, exploration and playful application of learning.

--Older Students Serving Younger Students

One of the classical pedagogical maxims is *docendo discimus*, "by teaching we learn." One of the blessings of being an older student, or an older child in a family, is the opportunity such a student has to help teach his younger classmates or siblings. When older students assist the teacher in teaching, at least three benefits emerge: 1) the older student acquires a deeper level of mastery of the skill or art, because teaching truly requires a more engagement deepens learning 2) the younger student is delighted to be taught by one of his older peers and enjoys the novelty and fresh expression of the teaching 3) the teacher enjoys the additional time to teach other students and complete other tasks; she most likely is also delighted to see students serving others by teaching.

Teachers should therefore look for the right settings and opportunities to employ the assistance of older students teaching younger students. Here are some common settings that are usually available:

Reading buddies: older students (say 5th grade or older) meet with Kindergarten children and listen, guide and correct the Kindergartners as they read to them.

History Lessons: If a 9th grade student is studying medieval history as is a 4th grade student, the older student can prepare a lesson or discussion on some aspect of medieval history. In class settings, a group of older students can collaborate to prepare a lesson and discussion with their younger peers. Some communities host a medieval feast in which the older students play the roles of hosts (and often as "king" and "queen," etc.) for the "lords" and "ladies" who attend the feast.

Tutoring: Older students can be paired with younger students to tutor the younger ones in math, Latin, reading, grammar and other subjects.

--Online and Face-to-Face Learning

We think that face-to-face learning is the best way to facilitate learning, study and the love for truth, goodness, and beauty. We think, therefore, that as much as possible, our study and teaching with students should be face-to-face. However, we also think there are times for reaching for the second-best setting, when circumstances suggest it. For example, not many of us have been trained in Latin, and finding Latin teachers locally can be difficult. In such a situation, we think it wise to offer an online class to your community to supplement your own face-to-face teaching. The online technology has improved such that well-taught managed online, live classes can effectively emulate a face-to-face class. We recommend you consider the live, online teaching at ScholeAcademy.com or other online academies.

Another viable option is to make use of published materials that include recorded teacher instruction, making it possible for you to study an art (like Latin) along with your child, or to monitor and facilitate the study of your child. We recommend the Latin for Children series and the Latin Alive series, but there are others good Latin materials that you should review as well.

--Teaching the Content of the Classical Curriculum (S&S, "curriculum")

We are passionate about the traditional curriculum of the liberal arts and require each Scholé Group to offer a curriculum sequence of the liberal arts we can summarize Latin, logic, rhetoric, mathematics, science and music. We also require a commitment to reading program of great literature or the "great books."

By “curriculum” we primarily mean the course of studies through the liberal arts and the great books. The curriculum is the course of studies we engage--not really the published materials we buy. Those published materials help us to teach our curriculum; therefore the published materials should not be our rulers, but rather our servants.

To teach the curriculum of the liberal arts and the great books, we must first love them ourselves and be growing in our own familiarity and eventual mastery of them. To some degree, most of us will have to learn these arts even as we teach them, but we must commit to learning them well, even over some years of study and teaching. The training on ClassicalU.com can help expedite your familiarity with these arts and your ability to teach them--we highly recommend that each tutor or teacher in Scholé Group community take the courses on ClassicalU.

We should all be patient with ourselves and realize that acquiring facility and expertise in these arts will take time, and that we will have to start with a focus on a few of them rather than mastering them all at once. We never master all of them, starting in midlife--that is fine, even if lamentable. That is why we are working in communities where we share the labor of teaching, with some of teaching in areas where we have more expertise, training and familiarity. As the generation that is seeking to give a classical education to our children without having received one ourselves, this is our lot, task, and privilege--we should embrace it without regret.

Our recommendation is that each parent and tutor pick an art or two (or three) for focused study and teaching over the next three-five years. One teacher might choose Latin and grammar; another might choose mathematics and science. Each community, however, should seek to have at least one member growing in expertise for each one of the liberal arts.

--The SG Curriculum Guide

We have created a curriculum guide designed for Scholé Group directors, teachers and parents. SG Curriculum Guide (SGCG) seeks to provide concrete guidance with flexible options for implementation. It is not so prescribed that directors need not think about what they should do and when, but no is it so loose that directors are left having to create a curriculum sequence out of thin air. The SGCG provides sample templates for various kinds of groups according to variations in span of students and group size, in community day meeting frequency, anchor arts/subjects (those subjects taught during a community day), non-anchor subjects (those subjects taught at home only), and specialty emphases (some groups emphasize one aspect or another of the classical curriculum).

We recommend that every director, and most teachers and parents secure a copy of the SGCG as it will create a shared vocabulary and meaningful description of how to implement a classical curriculum with restful learning in a homeschool community.

We also recommend that directors review and explore the Ambrose Curriculum Guide available to on ClassicalU.com to ClassicalU subscribers. This is a rich resource created and refined over ten years by a leading classical Christian school (The Ambrose School).

--Teaching from Rest / Scholé

As the name "Scholé Groups" implies, we seek to privilege and practice *scholé* or restful learning throughout the SG network. It is very important for the virtue and practice of *scholé* to be embraced and studied by every SG director and leadership team. The implementation of restful learning blended with a classical curriculum is what makes a Scholé Group distinctive, and we think, attractive.

The first year that a Scholé Group starts, there likely won't be a great deal of *scholé* for the director or leadership team. We say this honestly, and aware of the irony of the statement. The reality is, however, that it takes a good deal of sustained effort and labor to start and launch a new homeschooling community--even one dedicated to restful learning. Remember, however, the sabbatical pattern of working six days and resting on one. Even while you are busy organizing, planning and starting your group, you must find time to cease from this entrepreneurial activity and truly rest with your family.

- After the first year, the leadership should begin to note some relief from the business of starting a new SG. Many groups report that they find their stride in the second year, and then start to glide in the third year.
- Here are some ideas for helping relieve some of the business and stress of the first year or two:
- Travel with and grow with like-minded people. Trying to build a community with those that ultimately don't share your vision will only create stress for all parties.
- Consider starting small, and growing gradually. Naturally, it is easier to launch a group with fewer rather than many families. Some new directors hope and plan for groups of 20-25 families, and are ready for the challenge and work. Others are content to start with 4-6 families and grow gradually; some even plan to split into multiple smaller groups if necessary.

- Plan well. It is much wiser to spend more time planning so that you spend less time executing, than to jump in executing with little planning.
- Set aside time not only to plan and manage, but set aside time (perhaps every Sunday) to read good literature and deepen as a human being.

--Academic Discipleship / Mentorship

We regard education as in classical tradition as form of discipleship or mentorship. This means that the relationship between teacher and student is sacred and the central means by which a student motivated, inspired, cultivated and formed. This also means that the teacher must be growing and bearing fruit in her own life, so that she regularly is able to offer something fresh and desirable to her students.

The essential pedagogical method is therefore imitation: when the student is fully trained he will be like his teacher (Luke 6:40). The last half of Luke 6 (from Luke 6:27-49) is a lovely passage exploring how love and humility must guide our work as mentors and teachers. We must love even our enemies (v. 27), therefore how much should we love our students and our brothers? We must take the plank out of our own eye (repentance) so that we might see clearly to correct, instruct, guide--or take the speck out of our brother's eye (vs. 41-42). Through such repentance and care we might qualify as a "good tree" bearing good fruit. We then might become those who not only hears Christ's words--but does them, making us like a house built on a foundation of rock (vs. 48-49). We will be, as teachers, like a tree bearing good fruit, possessing treasure, and able to stand against the coming storms.

These are the kinds of teachers we long to be, knowing that our students will become like us.

PART 5: Ecclesial Perspective

Liturgical Learning is a phrase that describes the use of the embodied patterns from church worship and tradition for shaping the way we order time, space, and language in our schools and homeschools. Using a liturgical pattern within your group meetings and classes is an effective way to recover reflection and contemplation as part of learning. For example, one could aspects of a typical “order of worship” as a pattern for ordering a lesson.

This pattern or template is intended as a guide that should not be “followed to the letter” but nonetheless should shape the “learning liturgy” of SG classes, to distinguish them as scholé courses. It is this learning template and approach that will set SGs apart in the world of homeschool education. We think that it is one faithful application of the classical tradition, and it also is what differentiates us from other educational approaches. We want you to embrace and love this approach so that your students will too. Please note that extensive training in this approach is available on ClassicalU.com.

Courses and Lessons Related to Liturgical Learning

1. Level 1 Course: The Principles of Classical Pedagogy, by Dr. Christopher Perrin, especially the lessons on Embodied Learning.
2. Schole Muse Course 2: The Practice of Embodied, Liturgical Learning
3. Level 3 Course: The Monastic Tradition: A Study of the Monastic Tradition of Education and What we can Learn from it

Welcome/Greeting: 3 minutes (students greeted by beautiful images and music, possibly with a inspirational quotation or key question; 3 minutes of contemplation before official start)

Grateful Acknowledgment: 2 minutes (of the art, one another, the opportunity to study some aspect of God’s creation, the mind, nature, humanity)

Confess What We Need: 2 minutes (disposition, frame of mind, virtue, heart that seeks and calls out for wisdom; a written confession can be read and/or prayer offered); key Scripture: Proverbs 2:1-7

Teach/Present/Discuss: 50-60 minutes (traditional lesson, led by the teacher, ensuring that all students are engaged and participating)

Confess What We Know/Have Learned: 2 minutes (summary and review taking the form of “creedal” confession that edifies)

Expression of Thanksgiving: 2-3 minutes (led by teacher or mature student, but giving opportunity for all students to express gratitude to God, teacher, other students)

Benediction/Dismissal: 1 minute (prepared benediction written by teacher, or from traditional sources).

Processional: 3 minutes (return to beautiful music and images; students free to leave immediately, or remain for quiet contemplation).

APPENDICES

Nicene Creed

As an organization, the Scholé Groups Network is rooted in the Christian tradition, though we are not associated with any one particular denomination. As our name implies, we seek to present all teaching and learning restfully with scholé. While scholé as an idea originated with the Greeks, it was transformed and extended by church, especially in monastic centers of education. The Scholé Groups Network seeks to recover this approach to education that is contemplative, “liturgical,” restful and full of Christian peace. Our faith commitment is summarized in the Nicene Creed (posted below). Within our support network, each Scholé Group functions autonomously. As such, a Scholé Group may choose whether to specify a particular Christian tradition or denominational focus for their group. While the leadership of each Scholé Group should be comprised of individuals committed to the Christian faith, each Scholé Group may decide whether they wish to open enrollment up to students who represent another faith tradition, or no faith tradition.

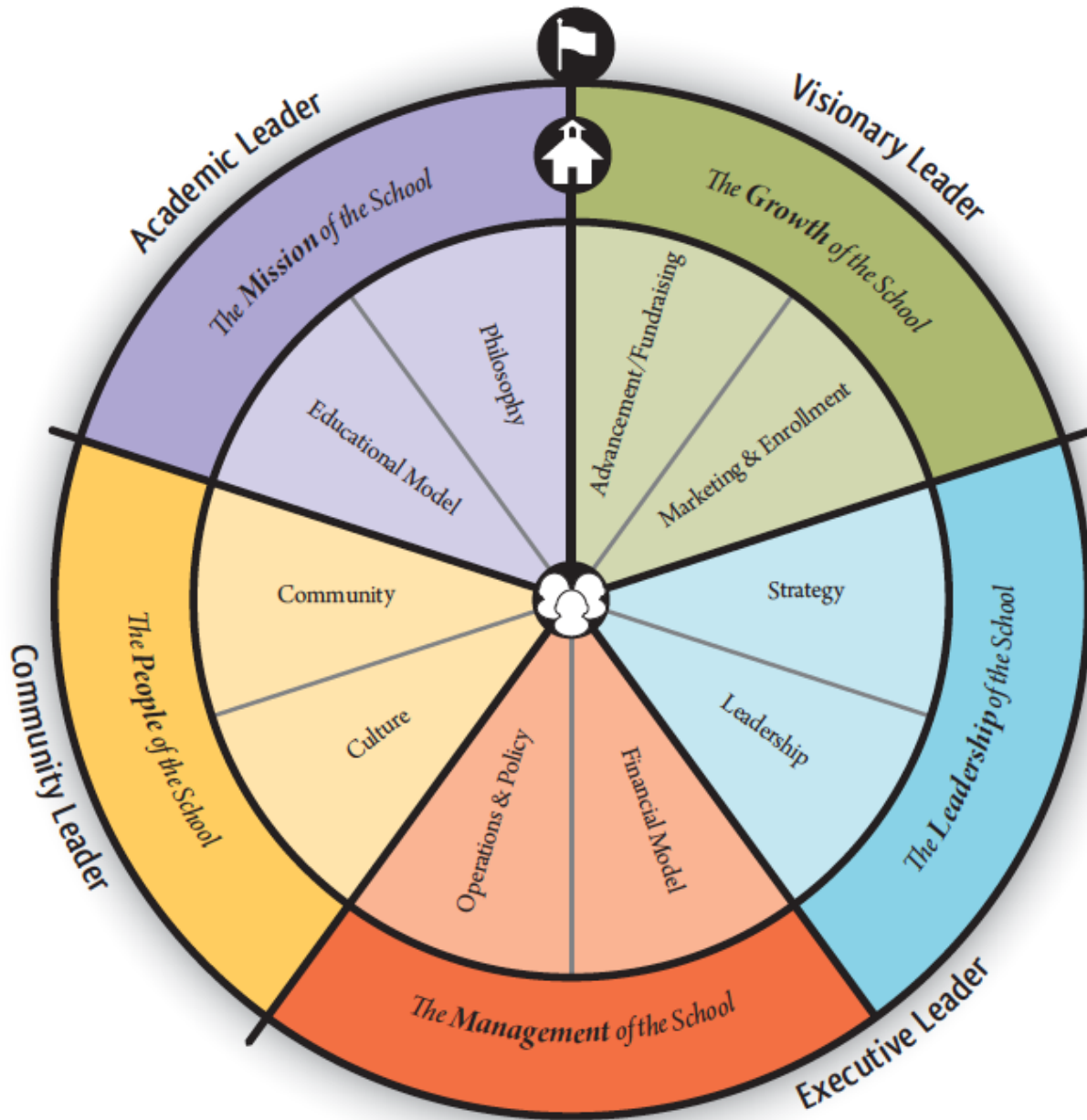
Nicene Creed

*We believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
begotten from the Father before all ages,
God from God,
Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made;
of the same essence as the Father.*

*Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and was made human.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried.
The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again with glory
to judge the living and the dead.
His kingdom will never end.*

*And we believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life.
He proceeds from the Father [and the Son],
and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.
He spoke through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and to life in the world to come. Amen.*

- Leadership Wheel**
- Portrait of a Teacher**
- Portrait of a Student**
- Lesson Evaluation Form/Rubric**
- Sample Course Description**
- Sample Course Map**
- Parent Agreement**
- Academic Calendar**
- Sample Budget**
- Reading / Viewing List (Required and Recommended)**
- Sample Work Agreement**
- Sample Review Guidelines**
- Sample Application**
- Sample Behavior Guidelines**
- Sample Info Packet**



Sample Portrait of A Teacher

The Liberal Arts and Christian Catechesis

Educators at our SG are noted for the ways they have been cultivated by liberal arts and Christian catechesis. These two cultivating forces have shaped their souls, mind and character so that they are fully-developed educators characterized by a Christian *humanitas* that is captivating and contagious. They have engaged in a long journey of loving that which is lovely and seeing all study as a divine office that seeks to bring glory to God--seeking and uncovering his truth, goodness and beauty throughout the world. Students love them and naturally want to emulate them.

Our SG educators display training in the liberal arts and are always learning.

Educators at our SG have been trained and continue to receive training in the liberal arts. Each educator is a liberal arts generalist, with some particular expertise. All educators either do have or are acquiring sufficient training in the following arts:

- Essential Latin
- Informal Logic
- Essential Rhetoric
- Essential Music and Mathematics
- Bible and Theology

Our SG educators are superb pedagogues. Educators at our SG teach very well because they are gifted as teachers and because they have been (or are being) trained and mentored to teach well. All educators show proficiency and eventual mastery of the following pedagogical principles:

- Festina lente (make haste slowly)
- Multum non multa (much not many)
- Repetito mater memoriae (repetition the mother of memory)
- Embodied, liturgical learning
- Songs, chants and jingles
- Wonder and curiosity/poetic teaching
- Educational virtues/cultivating affections
- Schole, contemplation, leisure

Our SG educators display wisdom, eloquence and virtue. Educators at our SG show the fruit of their own seeking of truth, goodness and beauty, such that they are in noteworthy measures wise, eloquent and virtuous. They are therefore, models to their students worthy of emulating, who are:

- Teachers and shepherds, instructing the mind, caretaking the soul
- Discerning guides to students navigating our tumultuous popular culture
- Gentle counselors who can exhort and advise students to pursue truth and virtue and a vital relationship with the Savior
- Well-spoken, apt and persuasive in both public and private settings
- Loving mentors who live consecrated, holy lives before students in all settings

Our SG educators show the fruit of Christian catechesis. Educators at our SG have drunk deeply from rich tradition of Christian theology, catechesis and church life. The liturgy, calendar and rhythms of church life inform and enliven the personal life of teachers as well as their classroom management, instruction and community.

Educators at our SG are familiar with and appreciative of:

- The Scriptures of the old and new testaments
- The history of redemption and the way that Christ is the center of biblical revelation

- Law and Gospel
- Traditional Christian Catechisms
- The Ecumenical Creeds
- Christian apologetics
- Christian Hymnody, liturgy and worship
- Confession and vocation

Our SG educators are colleagues and love being so. Educators at our SG know that a classical curriculum will only thrive in the soil of a rich homeschooling community. They recognize that as a faculty they should first be community of friends—colleagues that enjoy and serve each other in and out of the community. Each educator:

- Is a contributing member to the faculty team—the school within the community
- Serves on committees and academic teams in order to improve and enhance our curriculum, pedagogy and culture
- Enjoys being mentored and then (when ready) mentoring others
- Enjoys ongoing training and growth as a Christian, educator, shepherd and mentor
- Enjoys time with other educators outside of the community, conversing, learning and enjoying fine art, food, drink and music.

Our SG educators are professionals. Educators at our SG are reliable, trustworthy professionals who perform teaching and administrative duties on time and accurately. Every educator at our SG is a competent manager of documents, email and phone communication, student assignments, paper and homework. As professionals, educators at our SG are noted for:

- Communicating promptly and clearly with parents, students, colleagues and administrators
- Managing time, appointments and assignments regularly and well
- Preparing lesson plans in writing and with proficient review and reading
- and returning student work on time and with clear, helpful feedback

Our SG School Mission Statement

Our SG seeks to cultivate the souls of students by training them in the traditional liberal arts and Christian catechesis, preparing students in collegial community of teachers, parents, leaders and peers to ably serve the church, local community and nation with mercy, grace, virtue, wisdom and eloquence.

Core Values

- Love for the Triune God, his church, our neighbors and the broader world.
- Piety for the tradition of our church and the great ideas and practices handed down to us by previous generations.
- Wonder and delight in the world that God has created, including nature in all its resplendence and variety as well as the stories, art and artifacts of human culture
- A respect and appreciation for liberal arts that enable humans to fulfill their potential to use language, think, reason, calculate, measure, integrate and create.
- A love for wisdom that enables humans beings to rightly understand the world, right and ethical actions and the ways that all things are unified and ordered.
- An awe for the teaching of inspired Holy Scripture that provides meaning and unity to all the cosmos, human life, all our actions and all of our studies and endeavors.

Sample Portrait of a Graduate

Graduates of our SG are catechized in the Christian faith and trained in the liberal arts. As trained liberal artists, they evidence emerging mastery of language (grammar, logic, rhetoric) and mathematics. As catechized Christians in the classical tradition, they evidence reliance on the free grace of God and a distinct sense of vocation. Students understand that their training in the liberal arts sets them free and equips them to serve the church and wider community through their particular vocations.

Graduates of our SG manifest remarkable Christian character and maturity, which has been shaped by Christian catechesis. Graduates are familiar with the chief parts Scripture and historic Christian catechisms and creeds; they are shaped by the ongoing study of Scripture, the ecumenical confessions, church hymnody, liturgy and memorized prayers. Such catechesis and study has shaped the character of graduates with a growing love for Christ, his church and his world.

Graduates of our SG enjoy Christian liturgy, worship and the rhythm of the church calendar. Graduates display a good understanding of the history and liturgy of the Christian contemporary church and the ancient church that preceded it. They follow and enjoy the church calendar with its fasting and feasts, and mark time according to church life and the life of Christ. Graduates delight in Christian worship and music, and are not immersed in commercial popular culture, trends and music.

Graduates of our SG enjoy and value the warm community of friends at the school—including students, teachers, parents and church members. Graduates display love and appreciation for those in our SG community while in and out of the community. Graduates enjoy various kinds of mentoring relationships with teachers, parents, pastors and church members. They stay in touch with graduates and community members long after graduation.

Graduates of our SG demonstrate the fruit of their training in the liberal arts by mentoring teachers. Graduates of our SG have studied Latin, logic and rhetoric along with mathematics, science, literature and Bible. This liberal arts curriculum has been presented by mentoring teachers who have modeled wonder, curiosity, wisdom, virtue and love for God’s truth, goodness and beauty. This curriculum, taught in community by mentor-teachers, has shaped the souls of graduates so that they too love and seek wisdom and virtue, and are characterized by growing eloquence, humility and capacity—and so have become like their teachers. Graduates evidence their wisdom and training via their capacity to thoughtfully address controversial ethical, theological and cultural issues with clarity, truth and insight.



SCHOLÉ GROUPS
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Lesson Evaluation Form and Checklist

Note: No lesson can contain all elements listed in this form and teachers should not attempt to involve them all in any one lesson—this could be dangerous to one’s health.

The Seven Laws of Teaching: The seven criteria listed are taken from the *The Seven Laws of Teaching* by John Milton Gregory. These criteria will be used by the administrator in evaluating lessons, but they should also be used by teachers as a pedagogical guide and checklist—as a kind of heuristic device for discovering areas of weakness and for creating better lesson plans.

Eight Essential Principles of Classical Pedagogy: These eight criteria should also be used for evaluation and guidance.

Eight Essential Principles of Classical Pedagogy

2. Festina Lente

- ⊖ The teacher works to ensure mastery of each step of learning, and does not advance students to further study until mastery has been reached.
- ⊖ The teacher creates a learning atmosphere conducive to mastery rather than quickly “covering material.”
- ⊖ The teacher seems to understand that the classical curriculum is not primarily the content and pace suggested by a published resource or textbook.
- ⊖ The teacher models a focus on mastery of each step of learning.

2. Multum Non Multa

- ⊖ The teacher prefers to teach a few things deeply and well rather than cursorily covering many things that will not be mastered.
- ⊖ The teacher seems to understand that students will forget the majority of information that is merely “covered” with conventional teaching and assessment.

- ⊖ The teacher communicates to students that mastery of a concept, skill, or subject will increase joy of learning and lead to further study and mastery.
 - ⊖ The teacher models mastery of learning in his own life.
 - ⊖ Broad overviews of a concept or subject are put in the context of learning for mastery and deep enjoyment.
3. *Repetitio Mater Memoriae*
- ⊖ The teacher understands that regular repetition and review is necessary to acquire mastery.
 - ⊖ The teacher uses a variety of means for review/repetition appropriate to the students' age and level of learning.
 - ⊖ The teacher makes review interesting and so enables students to acquire a deeper mastery and increased appreciation for what is studied.
 - ⊖ The teacher requires students to rephrase, summarize, and explain the objects of their study.
4. Embodied Learning
- ⊖ The teacher understands that classical education aims first for the formation of a human soul and thus seeks to cultivate each student by bodily pathways and not only by rational means.
 - ⊖ The teacher understands that the rhythms, practices, traditions, and routines we create are just as important for learning as front-of-the class instruction.
 - ⊖ The teacher employs rhythms and practices that shape students to love the true, good, and beautiful.
 - ⊖ The classroom is decorated with beautiful art and graphics that cultivate students' affections for the true, good, and beautiful.
 - ⊖ The classroom is more like a home than a conventional school institution.
 - ⊖ Beautiful music is commonly played throughout the day.
 - ⊖ Students are blessed and prayed for on a daily basis.
 - ⊖ A classroom liturgy of appropriate thanksgiving, praise, singing, and petition is employed on at least a weekly basis.
5. Songs, Chants, and Jingles
- ⊖ The lower school teacher regularly (daily) employs songs, chants, and jingles to help students master important information.
 - ⊖ Songs, chants, and jingles are sung with enthusiasm, skill, and creativity.

- o Teachers, students, and parents contribute to the creation of songs, chants, and jingles.
- o The upper school teacher continues to employ songs, chants, and jingles as one important teaching and learning tool.

6. Wonder and Curiosity

- o The teacher understands that all learning should be stimulated and motivated by a student's natural wonder and curiosity about God, the world, and ourselves.
- o The lower school teacher understands that a student's natural wonder and curiosity should be cultivated, expanded, and protected.
- o The upper school teacher understands that an older student's natural wonder and curiosity are threatened in this culture and need to be carefully guarded from distraction, trivia, and cultural norms of "coolness."
- o The teacher regularly models his own wonder at learning, study, and discovery.

7. Educational Virtues

- o The teacher understands that a student without student virtues is not a student at all.
- o The teacher's lesson plans reflect her effort to develop student virtues such as love, humility, courage, temperance, constancy, diligence, and patience.
- o The teacher employs practical methods designed to foster and develop student virtues.
- o Students display sufficient virtues that they are independently studying and learning even without the presence and prompts of the teacher or parents.
- o Students show signs of loving that which is lovely (cultivated affections, ordered loves) and loving what must be done.
- o Both the teacher and students are aware of the danger of disordered passions and student vices and seek to overcome them.
- o The teacher collaborates with parents to cultivate student virtues.
- o The teacher models the chief student virtues himself.
- o The teacher displays a combination of warmth, enthusiasm, order, and respect in the way she manages the classroom and maintains student discipline.

8. Scholé, Contemplation, and Leisure
 - ⊖ The teacher understands that contemplation and reflection are necessary for students to deeply understand and love various manifestations of truth, goodness, and beauty.
 - ⊖ The teacher makes time in class for relaxed discussion and contemplation of the important truths the class is studying.
 - ⊖ The teacher displays skill and wisdom in the way she leads discussion of important truths, such as biblical teaching, literature, history, works of art, principles of mathematics, science, and music.
 - ⊖ The atmosphere of learning in the classroom is peaceful and relaxed, even when students are busily and actively engaged in learning and learning activities.

The Seven Laws of Teaching

1. Teacher's Knowledge: A teacher must be one who knows the lesson or truth or art to be taught. (Know thoroughly and familiarly the lesson you wish to teach—teach from a full mind and a clear understanding.)
 - ⊖ The lesson has been prepared with fresh study.
 - ⊖ The lesson has analogies/illustrations to more familiar facts and principles.
 - ⊖ The lesson is presented in familiar language.
 - ⊖ The lesson proceeds from simplest notions to the broadest views.
 - ⊖ The lesson is related to the lives and experience of the learners.
 - ⊖ The teacher works to ensure real understanding in the minds of the pupils.
 - ⊖ The lesson assumes that complete mastery of a few things is better than an ineffective smattering of many.
 - ⊖ The teacher appears to have studied for the lesson well in advance.
 - ⊖ The teacher works from a written outline.
2. Student Interest: A learner is one who attends with interest to the lesson. (Gain and keep the attention and interest of the pupils upon the lesson. Do not try to teach without attention.)
 - ⊖ The students display (1) passive attention, (2) active attention, or (3) absorbed "effortless" attention.
 - ⊖ The teacher works to secure absorbed attention.
 - ⊖ The teacher communicates that the students must engage in mental toil and effort to help achieve this absorbed attention.

- ⊖ The teacher does not begin the lesson until attention has been secured.
- ⊖ The teacher regains attention if it is lost.
- ⊖ The teacher does not exhaust the attention of the students.
- ⊖ The teacher arouses attention when necessary by variety in presentation.
- ⊖ The teacher kindles and maintains interest and attention.
- ⊖ The teacher uses age-appropriate illustrations and applications.
- ⊖ The teacher appeals to the interests of the students (e.g., favorite songs, stories, and subjects of students).
- ⊖ The teacher reduces distractions (inside and outside the classroom) to a minimum.
- ⊖ The teacher prepares beforehand thought-provoking questions.
- ⊖ The teacher makes his presentation attractive using illustrations and other aids, but these aids are not so prominent so as to become distractions.
- ⊖ The teacher exhibits and maintains enthusiasm.
- ⊖ The teacher makes use of eye contact and gesture.

3. Clear Language: The language used as a medium between teacher and learner must be common to both. (Use words understood in the same way by the pupils and yourself—language clear and vivid to both.)

- ⊖ Does the teacher appear to fully understand the student?
- ⊖ The teacher knows and understands the language of his students.
- ⊖ Does the student appear to fully understand the teacher?
- ⊖ Is the teacher's speech generally of plain and intelligible expression?
- ⊖ Do students do much of the talking?
- ⊖ Does the teacher summon to her aid the experience of the students?
- ⊖ Are gestures, visual aids, and other nonverbal communication utilized (illustrations, objects, pictures)?
- ⊖ Are analogies used?
- ⊖ Does the teacher resist becoming a lecturer (too talkative)?
- ⊖ Does the teacher secure from students as full a statement as possible of their knowledge of the subject?
- ⊖ Are new words taught to the students?
- ⊖ Does the teacher test the students' understanding of the words he uses?

- o The teacher has students rephrase concepts to make sure they clearly understand.
 - o The teacher is not fooled by appearances, but probes and checks a student's understanding.
4. Associative Knowledge: The lesson to be mastered must be explicable in the terms of truth already known by the learner—the unknown must be explained by means of the known. (Begin with what is already well known to the pupil on the subject and with what she herself has experienced--and proceed to new material by single, easy, and natural steps, letting the known explain the unknown.)
- o Since much of the truth is mastered by expression, the students do much of the talking.
 - o The lesson is less lecture and more discussion and debate.
 - o The teacher knows what words students use and their meanings.
 - o The teacher secures from students a full statement of their knowledge on the subject in order to learn their mode of expression and to correct their knowledge.
 - o The teacher expresses himself in the language of the pupils.
 - o The teacher uses simple words and always defines new, difficult words.
 - o The teacher repeats thought in other language when students fail to understand.
 - o The teacher helps explain the meaning of words with illustrations, including illustrations from the experience of students.
5. Mental Initiative and Discovery: Teaching is arousing and using the pupil's mind to grasp the desired thought to master the desired art. (Stimulate the pupil's own mind to action. Keep his thought as much as possible ahead of your expression, placing him in the attitude of a discoverer, an anticipator. Excite and direct the self-activities of the pupil, and as a rule tell him nothing that he can learn himself.)
- o The teacher seeks to help the student think and discover for herself--to rethink and relive the knowledge the teacher seeks to impart.
 - o The teacher does not push learning beyond the capacity of students to understand.
 - o The teacher ensures that students think and study independently (with guidance).

- ⊖ The teacher seeks to motivate and stimulate mental exercise in the students
- ⊖ The teacher makes use of some of the following exercises: comparison of the new with the old; the alternating analysis and synthesis of parts, wholes, classes, causes, and effects; the action of judgment and reason; and the effects upon thought of tastes and prejudices.
- ⊖ The teacher appeals to and seeks to inspire the students' love of knowledge for its own sake and the desire for knowledge to be used as a tool in solving problems or obtaining other knowledge.
- ⊖ The teacher seems to believe that each child has the potential to become an absorbed, excited lifelong learner.
- ⊖ The uses of knowledge are pointed out to the student by the teacher.
- ⊖ The teacher seeks to awaken the students' moral responsibility, motivation, and sensibility for the pursuit of knowledge (e.g., the glory of God, the love of man).
- ⊖ The teacher seems to prefer the excited thinking and conversation of her own students to her own voice.
- ⊖ The teacher is a lecturer only for short periods of time.
- ⊖ The teacher is constantly and regularly asking important questions and soliciting questions in the minds of his students.
- ⊖ The teacher frequently begins and ends lesson with an important question.
- ⊖ The teacher does not give explanations that "settle everything" and end all thinking on the subject.
- ⊖ The teacher does not rest until each student is awakened and asking questions.
- ⊖ The teacher shows how understood truths lead to other facts that renew questioning and thinking.
- ⊖ The teacher shows how an understood truth may still retain questions about its consequences, applications, and uses.
- ⊖ The students seem free and enthusiastic to ask questions.
- ⊖ The teacher does not quickly answer questions, but rephrases them and secures deeper thought on the students' part.
- ⊖ The teacher finds a "point of contact" between the lesson and her students.
- ⊖ The teacher regularly assigns or asks stimulating questions that awaken inquiry.
- ⊖ The teacher patiently waits for students to express their questions and thoughts.
- ⊖ The teacher resists the temptation to tell the student all he knows on a subject.

- o The teacher seems to understand that knowledge comes by thinking, not by being told.

- 6. Mental Reproduction and Integration: Learning is thinking into one's own understanding a new idea or truth, or working into habit a new art or skill. (Require the pupil to reproduce in thought the lesson she is learning--thinking it out in its various phases and applications till she can express it in her own language.) The pupil must reproduce in her own mind the truth to be learned. Application of this law is mainly for older students (dialectic and rhetoric).
 - o The teacher trains his students how to study.
 - o The student, rather than the teacher, actually does most of the work of education.
 - o Students exhibit the character of a self-discoverers or investigators.
 - o The students can rephrase or translate thought into their own or other words.
 - o Students ask for evidence and reasons for the truths they study.
 - o Students are aware that truths and problems they study are related to a larger network of knowledge.
 - o The teacher helps students to see the practical utility/applications of the truths they study.
 - o Students seek to apply their knowledge to practical purposes of life and thought.
 - o The teacher asks "why" frequently and regularly, so that students understand they are to give reasons for their opinions.
 - o Students are encouraged to "try their own power of expression."

- 7. Review: The test and proof of teaching done—the finishing and fashioning process—must be reviewing, rethinking, reknowing, reproducing, and applying of the material that has been taught, the knowledge and ideals and arts that have been communicated. (Review, review, review, reproducing the old, deepening its impression with new thought, linking it with added meanings, finding new applications, correcting any false views, and completing the true.) The completion, test, and confirmation of the work of teaching must be made by review and application.
 - o The teacher engages in regular review, especially at the beginning and end of a lesson.
 - o Most lessons close with a summary that serves as a review.
 - o Review is built into lesson planning, approximately every five or six lessons.

- ⊖ Courses end with a final, thorough review that is searching and comprehensive, leading students to a familiar mastery of what they have learned.
- ⊖ The teacher does not let his concern to “cover material” keep him from review.
- ⊖ Review is not a lifeless, colorless repletion of questions and answers.
- ⊖ Review by the teacher includes fresh conceptions, new associations, and applications.
- ⊖ Review is varied and includes repetition of words and lessons, a quick review of a fact or phrase, and a broad review of an entire subject (thorough restudy).
- ⊖ The teacher engages in partial reviews on a single fact or principle, the recall of some event or person, or a difficult point or question.
- ⊖ Complete reviews are employed as cursory review of a whole field in a few general questions or in a full and final reconsideration of the whole ground.
- ⊖ Students are sometimes encouraged to reread important selections (perhaps with a different emphasis or question in mind) for deeper understanding.
- ⊖ Review is spread over days and weeks and not done in single concentrated periods.
- ⊖ Students exhibit new associations from review.
- ⊖ Review often consists in calling up a fact or truth and applying it to some use.
- ⊖ Review sometimes makes use of the body and hands, and objects (visual aids).
- ⊖ Students show that reviewed material has become embedded in their permanent memory.
- ⊖ Students seem to understand that success in scholarship requires the habit of regular review (*repetitio mater memoriae*).

Spiritual Leadership

- ⊖ The teacher consistently exhibits love, joy, peace, and spiritual maturity in his daily work and relationships in the school.

Online Classroom Appearance

- o The classroom is neat, "clean," and well-organized.
- o The whole room is used creatively to reinforce material presented.
- o Routines and procedures are simple but adequate.

Classroom Discipline

- o The teacher consistently enforces her own and the school's discipline policies to provide an orderly atmosphere.
- o Students understand what is expected of them and display a good degree of self-discipline.

Planning/Communications

- o The teacher's plans show creativity and a good use of time in class.
- o The teacher's plans are clearly written and turned in on time each week.
- o The teacher's planning obviously uses the curriculum guide for timing and content.
- o The teacher communicates effectively and frequently enough with parents.
- o The teacher allows for parental input and involvement in the class.

Professionalism

- o The teacher demonstrates a biblical approach to his work by his punctuality, compliant attitude, appearance, etc.

Teacher Observed_____

Date Observed_____

Evaluator_____

General Comments/Summary:

Signature of Teacher_____

Signature of Evaluator_____



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SAMPLE COURSE DESCRIPTION

“The Art of Argument”/Informal Logic

Scholé Homeschool Group of Portland is offering a course this spring based on *The Art of Argument: An Introduction to the Informal Fallacies*. The course will be taught by Jane Jones. This course will run for 16 weeks, meeting on Mondays and Tuesdays for 75 minutes (from 2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.). The first day of class will be Monday, January 13, 2015, and the last will be Tuesday, May 6, 2016. (Please see the complete course schedule below.) This course will be a great opportunity for junior high and high school students to study with a seasoned educator and author of a logic book specifically designed for adolescents. The focus of the semester course is to present both supplemental instruction to accompany the study of the text and to provide a forum for questions, discussion, and implementation of logic. Information about how to register for the course, class size, and requirements is included below.

Description of the Course

Completing this course is the equivalent of one-half of a high school credit. As a fundamental text for teaching logic and critical thinking, *The Art of Argument* will impart to students the skills needed to craft accurate statements and identify the flawed arguments found so frequently in editorials, commercials, newspapers, journals, and every other media.

The Art of Argument is geared directly toward students as young as seventh grade, while still engaging for students in senior high. The course and text emphasize the practical and real-world application of soundly structured inductive logic. Using methods such as Socratic dialogue, ample discussion, integration of other subjects, and application to current events, the book is essential for dialectic and rhetoric students. We recommend *The Discovery of Deduction* after a study of informal fallacies.

Summary

Students will steadily and methodically work their way through *The Art of Argument* and examine the definitions, exercises, and worksheets—as well as engage in current events discussions. Students will learn how to distinguish formal from informal logic and learn the most important “logical fallacies” (28 of them) which will be divided into three basic categories: fallacies of relevance, fallacies of presumption, and fallacies of clarity. The format of the class will include analysis of advertisements and current events as well as presentations by the teacher and Socratic discussion.

Details

Class Size

The class will be [size].

Contact Information for Janet Jones:

E-mail: janetjones@email.com

Course Text

The course text is *The Art of Argument* and is available from Classical Academic Press (see www.ClassicalAcademicPress.com). The cost is \$22.95.

Course Schedule

The course will meet for 16 weeks, every Tuesday and Thursday at 1:00 p.m. EST. Classes will last for 75 minutes. The first day of class will be January 14, 2015. The class dates are as follows:

32 Classes

January 14, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30

February 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27

March 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20

April 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29

May 6, 8

Student Work

Students will be following the sequence of study contained in *The Art of Argument*. Some student work and assessments will be completed in the text, and some will also be completed using some online tools and assignments. During online discussion, students will review answers, pose questions, and explain and justify their answers and solution. Each week the teacher will lead discussions informed by issues and problems raised by students.

About Janet Jones:

Janet Jones has taught logic for several years at a classical school in Portland, Oregon. She has three children...

Scholé Homeschool Center of Harrisburg

Family Application Form 2015-16

Submit with Student Form(s) and non-refundable Application Fee of \$100. Fee will be applied to co-op fees.

	Checks should be made payable to Scholé Homeschool Center of Harrisburg		
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Forms can be mailed to: Susan Barrick at 4332 Crestview Road Harrisburg, PA 17112

Family Information

Family Name		Date of Registration	
Parent Name		Parent Name	
Home Phone	Cell or Work Phone	Home Phone	Cell or Work Phone
email address		email address	
Address		Address	
City, State Zip Code		City, State Zip Code	

Emergency Contact Information

Primary Emergency Contact		Secondary Emergency Contact	
Home Phone	Work Phone	Home Phone	Work Phone
Address		Address	
City, ST ZIP Code		City, ST ZIP Code	

Homeschool Experience

Number of years homeschooling	
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What curriculum do you use?			
Describe your homeschooling philosophy			
Membership Type			
Circle: Full-Time, Part-Time, or Drop-Off – please see p. 3 of information packet for description of each			
If Full Member indicate areas you may wish to serve			

Scholé Homeschool Center of Harrisburg

Student Application Form 2015-16

Submit with Family Application Form and Application Fee.

Student Information – please include one per student

Student Name		Birth Date		Gender	
				M F	
Student's email address		Grade in 2015-16			
Primary Physician		Phone		Emergency Contact	P h o n e
Allergies/Medical information we need to know about?					
List classes this student is applying for					
Describe any learning difficulties/special information you would like us to know					

If student is applying for enrollment in a Dialectic or Rhetoric Level level class:						
For a Great Books class, please include a writing sample of the student's work, and a list of books read in the past year.						
For a History Class, please include a list of books read during the past year, and/or text used.						
For a Science classe, please indicate what level of Math the student has completed, and the grade received, and any prior science classes, along with grade.						

Desiring a Kingdom School

Christopher A. Perrin, PhD

A review of *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* by James K.A. Smith.

We all have ideals—ideals for a wonderful marriage, the best job, a superb vacation. Our ideals, however, are often fuzzy. What does the ideal church really look like? An ideal government? What about an ideal school?

Well, to outline an ideal marriage involving the intersection of two inscrutable human beings is a difficult challenge; to actually live out an ideal marriage is beyond difficult. What might an ideal school look like—with the intersection of two to three hundred human beings—parents, teachers, administrators, board members, and...students? And that would be a small school.

If James K.A. Smith is right, we simply cannot help imagining an ideal future, an ideal of human flourishing. According to Smith in his book *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation*, imagining ideals is a large part of what it means to be human. We all are seeking some version of the good life; we all desire a kingdom. What is more, we are all being shaped and formed in various ways to love and desire one sort of kingdom or another.

Smith contends that before we humans are cognitive, rational beings, we are creatures of desires, passions, and loves. He further contends that the way we change is not primarily a matter of the mind, but primarily the result of the heart-shaping forces of the “cultural liturgies” we encounter in the world. He writes:

Because our hearts are oriented primarily by desire, by what we love, and because those desires are shaped and molded by the habit-forming practices in which we participate, it is the rituals and practices of the mall—the liturgies of the mall and market—that shape our imaginations and how we orient ourselves to the world. Embedded in them is a common set of assumptions about the shape of human flourishing, which becomes an implicit telos or goal of our own desires and actions. That is, the visions of the good life embedded in these practices become surreptitiously embedded in us through our participation in the rituals and rhythms of these institutions.

Smith takes time to examine the ways that various institutions do in fact act as cultural liturgies. He begins with the mall, imagining what it might be like for a Martian anthropologist to study its culture. Smith is convinced that such an anthropologist would see the mall as a thoroughly religious institution. The mall has a daily visitation of pilgrims who enter a large and dazzling cathedral of glass, concrete, light, and ornamentation. There are banners and flags displayed in a large atrium; there are familiar texts and symbols placed on walls to help us easily identify what is inside the various chapels that are contained in this labyrinthine cathedral. Rich iconography lines the wall of each chapel, and there are many three-dimensional statues adorned with the garb that we too can acquire in imitation of these ideals. These same icons, statues, and exemplars can be found in similar temples across the country and around the world. In fact the wide distribution of these colors and icons are found in many places in the outside world and have drawn us as pilgrims in the first place. The power of the

gospel message of these temples is the power of beauty, "which speaks to our deepest desires and compels us to come not with dire moralisms but rather with a winsome invitation to share in the envisioned good life."

At this point, Smith is just getting started with his analysis of the "religion of the mall." He goes on to describe the purchasing experience as a kind of secular Eucharist. Understandably, he does not like or praise the religion of the mall. He does acknowledge, however, that the mall understands something profound about human beings. It embodies its view of its kingdom, rather than merely talking about it. He writes, "Indeed, the genius of mall religion is that actually it operates with a more holistic, affective, embodied anthropology (or theory of the human person) than the Christian church tends to assume. Because worldview-thinking still tends to focus on ideas and beliefs, the formative cultural impact of sites like the mall tends to not show up on our radar." (We don't have glasses to see them.)

As you might guess, the point of Smith's book is to help us turn on our radar to the formative impact that various cultural liturgies have on us all. Of interest to classical educators will be his liturgical analysis of university education and of Christian college education. Using Tom Wolfe's book *I Am Charlotte Simmons*, Smith points out that the college experience is far more than the fifteen hours a week a student spends in a classroom. Secular university experience exerts a dynamic and intentional shaping influence on college students in dozens of ways. Dorm life, frat house life, football games, drinking, bar and club escapades, hooking up, and an exhausting, frenetic rhythm of classes, study, and exams shape and form students for the "real world" of "corporate ladder climbing and white-collar overtime needed in order to secure the cottage, the boat, and the private education for the kids." Smith concludes that while the classroom, laboratory, lecture hall, and library have performed some role in shaping a student, they do not compare to the other ways students are shaped. The information provided in the academic areas is "not nearly as potent as the formation we've received in the dorm and frat house, or the stadium and dance club."

His look at Christian colleges is not much more encouraging. Too many Christian colleges in his opinion simply take the basic secular approach to education and add the integration of a Christian worldview or Christian perspective. Smith suggests that the dominant paradigm of Christian education asserts that "goal of a Christian education is to produce professional who do pretty much the same sorts of things that graduates of Ivy League and state universities do, but who do them 'from a Christian perspective,' and perhaps with the goal of transforming and redeeming society." For Smith this is regrettable reduction as it "unhooks Christianity from the practices that constitute Christian discipleship." For Smith, the worship practices of the church must be vitally bound up with the rhythms and practices of a Christian college (and school). When the Christian college is unhooked from the liturgies of the church, we end up with an intellectualization of Christianity, leading students to think that "being a Christian doesn't radically reconfigure our desires and wants, our practices and habits." This happens because for far too long Christian education has "been concerned with information rather than formation; thus Christian colleges have thought it sufficient to provide a Christian perspective, an intellectual framework, because they see themselves as fostering individual 'minds in the making.' Hand in hand with that, such an approach reduces Christianity to a denuded intellectual framework that has diminished bite because such an intellectualized rendition of the faith doesn't touch our core passions."

I think by now Smith's thesis is beginning to sink in. Christian worldview instruction is not enough. Appealing to the mind and intellect is not enough. Not that instruction in Christian worldview and ideas should not be done—such instruction is vital. But it is not

sufficient, not enough. We must address the core passions of our students, and we do this by means of creating community, atmosphere, rhythms, practices, and traditions that shape the hearts of students by engaging them as affective, passionate lovers, not mere minds. The church, rightly worshipping, seeks to do this. Welcoming, greeting, singing, hearing, tasting, standing, kneeling, we worship with all of our person—mind and body. Embodied worship is formative and shapes our love for the kingdom of God and acts as a powerful counterformation over against the formative influence of a dozen secular liturgies we witness and experience. In fact the liturgy of worship helps subvert the power of these secular liturgies, wising us up to their power and methods.

This is where things get interesting. Could it be that our children are being shaped to love a version of the good life that is primarily determined by the “liturgies” of the mall, football stadium, TV sitcoms, and the iPod? Could it be that our schools that privilege direct engagement with the mind, and the presentation of ideas and a Christian worldview but are nonetheless failing to thwart the power of these other shaping influences? Any teacher with experience can tell you about scores of students whose minds and hearts are seldom truly present in the classroom. They are rather occupied with the shopping for the next fashionable item, the next soccer game, the latest movie, Monday Night Football, the coming rock concert. These things shape them and engage them as lovers, and the teacher often feels powerless standing before her whiteboard with a black marker in her hand. She wonders if it would not be better to show them an educational movie—something they can relate to.

Consider the atmosphere and community of your school. What is its liturgy? That is, what are its rhythms, rituals, practices, and traditions? We carefully plan our curriculum and lessons. Do we carefully plan and create rhythms, rituals, practices, and traditions? Do our teachers carefully plan rhythms, rituals, practices, and traditions for each class of students? If Smith is right, then it is these things that will most profoundly shape what our students will love. Every teacher knows that students will forget seventy-five percent of the content you “teach” them in a classroom. Might it be wise then to pay attention to more than just content and think about form with the same rigor? How can we shape, form, and engage hearts, minds, and yes, even bodies? Is there vibrant worship in your school? Does music echo through the halls and great art adorn the walls? Are there dinner parties and great conversation with students and adults alike? Is your facility attractive and conducive to worship and learning? Are poems read and recited, stories written and told? Is Scripture read at lunch for a time? Are there traditions of hospitality when existing students welcome new students into the school, when upper school students warmly welcome new 7th graders or 9th graders? Do teachers and parents gather socially to read books, cook meals, and pray? Do high school students babysit for the young children of teachers (maybe at no charge)? Do your older students help teach the younger students and join them for games on the playground from time to time? Do teachers and students go hiking together or bike-riding or running? Are pastors visiting your school, counseling students, speaking in your classrooms or chapel services, or teaching a Bible class? Do you pray for the churches represented by your school and for each pastor by name? Does your school fast occasionally and give money or food to the needy?

These and dozens of other questions might enable us to think more deeply about embodying classical Christian education, such that students absorb it with all five senses and with their hearts as well as their minds. By considering such questions (and generating more), we might clarify our vision of an ideal classical school, and remove much of the fuzziness and confusion that impedes enthusiasm and momentum. Classical education has historically been communal and ecclesial, and Smith poignantly reminds us of this. He also helps us to see more clearly that a classical Christian

education involves the collaboration of family, church, and school as we seek nothing less than the kingdom of God. Classical educators and leaders would do well to learn from the insights of this valuable and timely book.

Embodied Learning Outline for Discussion

PHILOSOPHY

1. We are not merely thinking things...or disembodied minds. Our hearts are actually shaped through our five senses to love some ideal of human flourishing. The rational part of us—our minds—is crucial and part of being made in the image of God. But our bodies are just as important, and just as determinative of what we choose to love. This insight is developed in James K.A. Smith's book *Desiring the Kingdom*.
2. Augustine said we should "order our loves" so that we love beautiful things with the appropriate esteem and affection due those things. There is a proper way to love a daughter and a proper way to love an oak tree. We need to learn how to "love those things which are lovely"—which means our affections need to be cultivated.
3. C.S. Lewis develops this theme in his slim book *The Abolition of Man*. He argues that modern students are not so much jungles that need to be cut (overly affective) but rather deserts that need to be irrigated (students lack robust affections and sentiment).
4. Because we have been conditioned to resist calling something truly lovely and then loving it, we often lack the courage to praise, extol, admire, and praise. We also lack the courage to blame the ugly, despise the lie, flee the immoral. We have become humans without robust emotion, without conviction, without affections, without heart. In Lewis's words, we have become men without chests.
5. Because we are physical beings we are creatures of habit in the world, creatures who create and live in various daily, weekly, and annual "liturgies"—rhythms, practices, and routines that impart meaning and direct our affections to a view of the "good life." There are secular as well as ecclesial liturgies. For example, the mall has its own "liturgies" that attract our hearts (through the five senses) and shape our loves (often disordering our loves). Other liturgies: sports, TV, Facebook, concerts, fraternity or dorm life, etc.

PRACTICE

If we are liturgical creatures who live life through our bodies, then what are the implications for education?

1. Education is embodied whether we acknowledge it or not. It always takes some form, even if "patched together" with little thought.
2. Consider the forms (liturgies, embodiment) of your past education: the architecture of the school, the setup of the classrooms and hallways, the bells, the smells, the cafeteria, the liturgy of the bus ride to and from school... Recall

- the materials posted on the walls of your classrooms and the way your teacher would greet you and dismiss you from class. Recall the pledge of allegiance, the school song...
3. Some practices (embodiments) are more fitted toward the educational goals of wisdom, virtue, and eloquence (traditional, classical educational desired outcomes). Other practices will better fit the outcome of just getting a job, or serving the state.
 4. Here are some practical questions that can lead to practical changes. Consider the atmosphere of your homeschool. What is its liturgy? That is, what are its rhythms, rituals, practices, and traditions? We carefully plan our curriculum and lessons. Do we carefully plan and create rhythms, rituals, practices, and traditions?
 5. If Smith is right, then it is these things that will most profoundly shape what our students will love. Every teacher knows that students will forget seventy-five percent of the content you “teach” them in a classroom. Might it be wise then to pay attention to more than just content, and think about form with the same rigor? How can we shape, form, and engage hearts, minds, and yes, even bodies? Is there vibrant worship in your homeschool? Does music echo through the house and great art adorn the walls? Are there dinner parties and great conversation with your children? Is your homeschool “room” attractive and conducive to worship and learning? Are poems read and recited, stories written and told? Is Scripture read at lunch for a time? Are there traditions of hospitality when inviting younger siblings or co-op students into your home or class? Do parents in your co-op gather socially to read books, cook, dine, and pray? Do older school students babysit for the younger children—and for other parents in your co-op? Do you older students help teach the younger students and join in their games and play? Are pastors engaged with your homeschool or co-op—perhaps counseling children or teaching a co-op Bible class? Do you pray for your church and the churches represented by your co-op—and for each pastor by name? Does your homeschool fast occasionally and give money or food to the needy?
 6. These and dozens of other questions might enable us to think more deeply about embodying classical Christian education, such that students absorb it with all five senses and with their hearts as well as their minds. By considering such questions (and generating more), we might clarify our vision of an ideal homeschool, and remove much of the fuzziness and confusion that impedes enthusiasm and momentum. Classical education has historically been communal and ecclesial, and James K.A. Smith poignantly reminds us of this. He also helps us to see more clearly that a classical Christian education involves the collaboration of family, church, and community as we seek nothing less than the kingdom of God.
 7. Consider starting a Scholé Sisters group. Scholé Sisters meet together to engage in...*scholé*. They take time to pursue truth, goodness, and beauty together on a monthly basis to ensure that they never stop being students themselves.

Scholé in the Scriptures: Choosing What Is Better

Christopher A. Perrin, PhD

Those of you who know this blog (or anything about me) know that I have been reading and writing about returning scholé (σχολή) to our schools and homeschools for about three years now. Here is an article relating the Greek concept of scholé to the Old and New Testament.

Aristotle and Scholé

Well, it was Aristotle who first described the importance of *scholé* (leisure, restful learning and conversation, contemplation), and yet the Hebrew Scriptures (which predate Aristotle) seem to touch on this theme as well. The New Testament certainly does too in some unique ways.

Aristotle writes in Book VII of *Politics*:

...we fulfill our nature not only when we work well but when we use leisure (scholé) well. For I must repeat what I have said before: that leisure is the "initiating principle" of all achievements. Granted that work and leisure are both necessary, yet leisure is the desired end for which work is done; and this raises the question of how we ought to employ our leisure. Not by merely amusing ourselves, obviously, for that would be to set up amusement as the chief end of life. (Book VII:iii)

Aristotle does not disparage wage-earning work, but he says that such work (and amusement) cannot be fitting ends for human aspiration and life. The highest end is the right employment of *scholé*.

Scholé in the Old Testament

Now this insight was picked up by the church (many centuries later) and identified with contemplation. This is not surprising since the Old Testament also suggests a life of "restful learning" and contemplation as the heart of a full human life:

One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple. (Psalm 27:4)

This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it." (Isaiah 30:15)

*"I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil."
(Job 3:26)*

The Hebrew concept of *shalom* (often translated "peace") also includes a connotation similar to *scholé*: in addition to the idea of safety and soundness, *shalom* also frequently means quiet, tranquility, and friendship—all components of *scholé*.

In the Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint), *scholé* only appears twice (in Genesis 33:14 and Proverbs 28:19) and means "leisure" in the primary sense of "going slowly" (Genesis 33:14) and even "wasting time" (Proverbs 28:19). In the Wisdom of Sirach, however, we find this interesting passage:

The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure (scholé): and he that hath little Venture shall become wise. How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad, that driveth oxen, and is occupied in their labors, and whose talk is of bullocks? (Wisdom of Sirach 3:24-25)

Here the word *scholé* is used very much as Aristotle uses it, and the context makes it clear that wisdom comes from the man who takes the opportunity of *scholé* and does not overindulge in wage-earning labors. Note how the passage not only addresses too much Venture or labor—but also addresses the mental preoccupation of the man who only talks about his work. If his only talk is of his bullocks, we must surmise that his only thought is about them as well.

Scholé in the New Testament

In the New Testament (written in Greek), *scholé* only occurs a few times. *Scholé* can refer to a lecture hall (where *scholé* or learned discussions occur), and this is what we find in Acts 19:9, where we read that Paul took his disciples daily for discussions at the lecture hall (*scholén*) of a man named Tyrannus. In 1 Corinthians 7:5, Paul writes that married couples should devote (*scholaséte*) themselves to prayer. Paul here uses the verbal form of *scholé* that means to have rest or leisure, or to be dedicated or devoted (no distractions or obligatory work!).

Beyond the actual use of the word *scholé*, we do find the New Testament addressing the concept of *scholé* in several places:

The Example of Christ

The first indication we get that Jesus condones “restful learning” is that time we find Him at age twelve, away from His parents for at least three days, “in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions” (Luke 2:46). Leaving aside the fact that “Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers” (2:47), we should note that Jesus spent three days (sleeping at the temple too?) engaged in conversation with the best teachers in Israel. And He did this at the age of a sixth grader. He tells His parents that “he had to be in his Father’s house” (see 2:49), but we note that what He was doing in His Father’s house resembles *scholé*, or restful learning.

We find Christ frequently going off by Himself to pray, even for forty days at a time. Christ seems never to be in a hurry, but relaxed and peaceful. Even when others around Him are frenetic, He is tranquil. In Luke 10, Martha implores Jesus to tell her sister Mary to help her with dinner preparations, for Martha was busy working while Mary was sitting and talking with Jesus. Jesus responds to her: “Martha, Martha you are anxious (busy) and troubled about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better (literally ‘the good part’), and it will not be taken from her” (see Luke 10:42).

It is hard to imagine a better illustration from the gospels about what *scholé* means than this event recorded in Luke 10. We all have to prepare meals, do dishes, and work for wages—and these are good things. The better thing, however (when we are free to chose), is to talk with a master. Mary was talking with the Master, and certainly chose wisely.

Example from Paul’s Writings

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 3:

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)

Paul notes that the faithful, in the context of the freedom given by the Spirit, contemplate (gaze, reflect) the glory of God and are then transformed to resemble that very glory. This reminds us of Christ’s teaching that a student, when he has been fully trained, will be like his master (Luke 6:40). Paul also hints that this transformation is a process that takes time. We gaze and study the glory, and slowly (with

ever-increasing glory, literally “from glory to glory”) we grow to resemble this glory.

Paul has in mind the experience of Moses coming down from Mt. Sinai after meeting with God there, having received the two tablets containing the Ten Commandments. When Moses came down from that mountain, his face was glowing brightly enough that he spooked the Israelites and had to put a veil over his face.

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him.... Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the LORD. (Ex. 34:29-30, 35)

Apparently to Paul, the life of the Christian is to be one of contemplation and gazing—looking on the same one that set Moses’s face aglow. This implies undistracted gazing, focus, and...time. Looking, gazing, and contemplation thus become a metaphor for learning, conversation, and transformation. After all, Moses was not upon the mountain in a kind of dream sleep—he was rather talking and listening to God—having a remarkable conversation with the Master. Paul suggests that we can now do the same.

Conclusion

It seems that even when not using the word *scholé*, the Old and New Testaments nonetheless describe a growing and learning process that is very much in keeping with Aristotle’s use of the word. Slow, restful, conversation and learning is set before us as an example to follow, with Christ Himself as the Master of *scholé*.

If the entire Christian life can be summarized as a kind of slow and sanctified conversation with the Master, could it be that all of our learning should take a cue from this same kind “restful learning” and resemble a refreshing and ongoing conversation?

If Christ says, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest,” and if He says, “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:28-29), then should not the way we educate our sons and daughters be gentle and restful?

How many of us have been busy about many things, thinking that we were not free to choose anything else?

READING / VIEWING LIST

Recommended

- *The Scholé Groups Handbook*
- [The Liberal Arts Tradition: The Philosophy of Christian Classical Education](#)
- "Desiring a Kingdom School" by Christopher Perrin (see article in full above)
- "Scholé in the Scripture: Choosing What Is Better" by Christopher Perrin (see article in full above)
- Watch to the video seminar "The Liturgical Classroom and Virtue Formation" (by Jenny Rallens) [here](#).
- [Desiring the Kingdom](#) (James K.A. Smith)
- [Leisure: The Basis of Culture](#) (Josef Pieper)
- [The Abolition of Man](#) (C.S. Lewis)
- See the many books recommended on classical education here: <http://www.classicaleducator.com/page/top-100-books-on-cce>. (Please note that in order to access this link you must sign up for a free account at ClassicalEducator.com.)



PARENT AGREEMENT

2015-2016 Academic Year

In the essentials unity, in the nonessentials liberty, in all things charity--Augustine

Teaching children is a noble activity but also one that can create anxiety. After all, to hire someone to teach your child touches upon and impacts (1) your money, (2) your faith and life philosophy, and (3) the soul of your child. It is important, therefore, that we clarify what each party (*Scholé Group of Portland* and *the paying parent*) expects from the other, and to commit to treat each other with respect and charity.

What follows is a general description of what we (Scholé Group of Portland, or SG) pledge to provide to you, the parent or guardian, as the paying customer for our SG courses. There is also a section that describes what you as the customer pledge to SG, and your various logistical and financial responsibilities, and student requirements. We look forward to a successful partnership, serving each other for the education of the next generation.

Scholé Group Responsibilities

- SG will provide qualified teachers to teach students to excellent academic standards, also seeking to cultivate noble affection and virtues in the souls and minds of students. SG teachers will follow the “*scholé* approach” of restful learning in a congenial atmosphere.
- SG teachers will provide meaningful assessments to help students and parents gauge the academic progress of students and to help ensure they are on the path to mastery.
- SG teachers will not upbraid nor humiliate students, but will seek to guide, mentor, and correct students (including their class behavior) in accordance with Christian love and wisdom. When a sensitive issue arises, or an offense or grievance, SG teachers will seek to speak to students privately whenever possible. SG expects that the vast majority of discipline and behavior issues will be handled by means of meaningful conversation with the teacher and student. Discipline and behavior issues that are not resolved by conversation with teacher and student will be brought next to the parent or guardian’s attention. Discipline and behavior issues will only be brought to the SG director when no resolution has been achieved after conversation with the teacher and parent.
- SG will provide high-standard virtual classroom software and learning management system software, and offer general support and guidance in order that parents and students can use these tools well.

Parent and Guardian Responsibilities

- Parents and guardians will encourage students to be diligent in the completion of all assignments (on time), coming to class on time, participating in class discussions, and maintaining respectful behavior in class. Outside of class, parents and guardians will seek to reinforce and complement the “restful learning” approach of SG. Parents will assist students by reviewing homework, proofreading written assignments, and helping

students stay organized, on task, and on pace. Parents will review the annual academic calendar to ensure that students are prepared ahead of time for coming classes.

- Parents and guardians will trust the assessments of qualified teachers who are masters of their art, and will generally refrain from challenging the assessments of teachers. Parents and guardians will, however, seek to understand the academic progress of students and engage teachers with questions when they need clarity and guidance in order to help their children/students.
- Parents and guardians will encourage respectful behavior of students in class and in all communications with other students or the teacher. Parents and guardians will bring any offense or grievance privately to the teacher for resolution. Only after a discussion with the teacher fails to bring resolution will an offense or grievance be brought to the attention of the SG director.

Financial Responsibilities

- Parents and guardians will pay course tuition prior to the first class of a given SG course. Payment for courses will be made [date]. Tuition fees for a given course are listed [location of fee schedule].
- **Waiting Lists:** If a class is full, SG may offer a waiting list for another section of the class by collecting a small deposit for a new section of the class. If enough students (at least five) sign up for a new section, SG will offer the class, and the parents will purchase the class for the tuition of the class minus their deposit. No refund will be offered if enough students sign up. If not enough sign-up, the deposits will be refunded.
- **Withdrawing from a Class:** SG will offer a 100 percent refund for students withdrawing from a class within the first week of class (after class has started)—for any reason. SG will offer a 90 percent refund for students withdrawing from a class within the first two weeks of a class—for any reason.

Logistical Responsibilities

- Parents and guardians will maintain good communication with SG teachers and ensure that students are able to access the learning management system online. Parents and guardians will notify teachers and the SG director [director's e-mail] of any change in e-mail address and phone number.
- Parents and guardians will ensure that students make up any missed classes (posted on the learning management system) and assignments. They will also help students follow the course description and map that may be distributed by SG teachers.
- Parents and guardians will ensure that suitable computer equipment (see hardware and software requirements, attached) is available and working so that students can access any online content and use the equipment well.
- **Transferring or Switching a Class:** Parents or guardians may arrange to switch a class, providing space is available in the class desired, and upon approval of the SG director. Transfers are permitted within the first two weeks from the first class period. Transfers are approved by contacting the SG director at [director's e-mail].
- **Late Enrollment:** Parents and guardians may enroll students into a class as late enrollment students within four weeks of a yearlong course and within two weeks of a semester or summer session course. The tuition price for late enrolling students will remain the same as for on-time enrolling students. Parents or guardians wishing to enroll late should contact the SG director at [director's e-mail].
- **Class Cancellations or Changes:** Rarely, SG may have to cancel a class or move students to a new section of a class (with a different teacher). A full refund will be given to parents of a student whose class has been canceled. If a student has been moved to

a new section of a class (with a different teacher), parents will be permitted to withdraw their student from the course and receive a full refund if parents withdraw within four weeks of receiving notice of the move to a new section.

- Auditing a Class: Students may audit a SG class by paying 70 percent of the tuition fee. Auditors are not responsible to take any examinations or complete any assignments. Teachers will not assess any written work of auditors. Auditors may participate in class discussions but only at the teacher's discretion and with permission from the teacher. Those wishing to audit a class should contact the SG director at [director's e-mail].

General Requirements for SG Students:

- Students enrolling in SG courses should be able to write and communicate at their grade level. SG teachers are not equipped to teach students with severe learning disabilities.
- Students enrolling in SG lower school courses should be at least eight (8) years of age before the first day of class but not older than thirteen (13) by the first day of class.
- Students enrolling in SG upper school courses should be at least twelve (12) years of age before the first day of class, unless specified otherwise in the course listing on the SG website.
- Students enrolling in a SG course must have all of the required texts and materials required in the course listing on the SG website.
- Parents with two or more students enrolled in a SG course may allow two to three students to use one computer, but must be responsible to ensure that audio and video will work well with the configuration. If the configuration will not work well, parents will be required to provide one working computer for each student. SG encourages parents to provide one working computer for each student if at all possible.
- Parents and guardians will provide computer equipment according to the standards set forth in the SG technological requirements (see hardware and software requirements, attached).
- SG Statement of Faith: SG subscribes to the Nicene Creed.

Formatting Guidelines:

Part 1: Red Cambria 22

- I. **Green Cambria 18**
 - A. **Green Cambria 16**
 1. **Black Ariel 12**